

MODELS OF THE HISTORY
OF PHILOSOPHY

MODELS OF THE HISTORY
OF PHILOSOPHY

I

edited by
Giovanni Santinello

for the English edition :

C. W. T. Blackwell (*General Editor*)
Philip Weller (*Associate Editor*)

PLAN OF THE WORK, IN FIVE VOLUMES :

- 1 *From Its Origins in the Renaissance to the 'Historia Philosophica'*
(the late fifteenth to the later seventeenth century)
- 2 *From the Cartesian Age to Brucker*
(the mid seventeenth to the mid eighteenth century)
- 3 *The Enlightenment and the Kantian Age*
(the later eighteenth century)
- 4 *The Age of Hegel*
(the first half of the nineteenth century)
- 5 *The Later Nineteenth Century*

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Models of the History
of Philosophy:
From Its Origins in the Renaissance
to the 'Historia Philosophica'

by
Francesco Bottin, Luciano Malusa, Giuseppe Micheli,
Giovanni Santinello, Ilario Tolomio

C. W. T. Blackwell (*General Editor*)
Philip Weller (*Associate Editor*)
for the English edition



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A) PERIODICALS, BIBLIOGRAPHIES, AND REFERENCE WORKS (SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)

- Adam M. Adam, *Dignorum laude virorum . . . immortalitas, se Vitae theologorum, jureconsultorum, et politicorum, medicorum, atque philosophorum maximam partem Germanorum, nonnullam quoque exterorum*, 3rd edn, 1 vol. in 4 pts. (Pt. 1 divided into 2 sections, each separately paginated) (Frankfurt am Main, 1705):
Pt. 1: *Vitae Germanorum theologorum; Vitae theologorum exterorum principum*;
Pt. 2: *Vitae Germanorum jureconsultorum et politicorum*;
Pt. 3: *Vitae Germanorum medicorum*;
Pt. 4: *Vitae Germanorum philosophorum*.
- AE *Acta eruditorum*, 50 vols. (Leipzig, 1682-1731).
- AE Suppl. *Acta eruditorum quae Lipsiae publicantur supplementa*, 10 vols. (Leipzig, 1692-1734).
- BA *Bibliothèque angloise; ou Histoire littéraire de la Grande-Bretagne*, ed. M. de la Roche and A. de La Chapelle, 17 vols. (Amsterdam, 1717-28).
- Bayle P. Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 5th edn, rev., corr., and augmented, with the author's Life, by Mr Des Maizeaux, 4 vols. (Amsterdam, 1740).
- BCh *Bibliothèque choisie*, ed. J. Le Clerc, 28 vols. (Amsterdam, 1703-13).
- Brucker J. Brucker, *Historia critica philosophiae*, 4 vols. in 5 (Leipzig, 1742-4); *Appendix* (Leipzig, 1767; facs. repr. of the whole, Hildesheim and New York, 1975).
- BUH *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, ed. J. Le Clerc, 26 vols. (Amsterdam, 1686-1702).
- Buonafede, *Della istoria* Agatopisto Cromaziano [Appiano Buonafede], *Della istoria e della indole di ogni filosofia*, 6 vols. (Venice, 1782-3).
- Buonafede, *Della restaurazione* Agatopisto Cromaziano [Appiano Buonafede], *Della restaurazione di ogni filosofia ne' secoli XVI, XVII e XVIII*, 3 vols. (Venice, 1792).
- Fabricius J. A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Graeca*, 4th edn, ed. G. C. Harles, 10 vols. (Hamburg, 1790-1807).
- Freher P. Freher, *Theatrum virorum eruditione clarorum*, 2 vols. (Nuremberg, 1688).

- Fülleborn *Beyträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie*, ed. G. G. Fülleborn, 12 fascs. in 3 vols. (Jena, 1791-9).
- Heumann *Acta philosophorum; das ist, gründliche Nachrichten aus der Historia philosophica*, ed. C. A. Heumann, 18 fascs. in 3 vols. (Halle, 1715-27).
- HOS *Histoire des ouvrages des sçavans*, ed. H. Basnage, 25 vols. (Rotterdam, 1687-1709).
- Imperiali G. Imperiali, *Musaeum historicum*, 1 vol. in 2 pts. (Venice, 1640).
- Jöcher C. G. Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1750-51; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1960-61).
- Jöcher (Erg.) J. C. Adelung and H. W. Rotermund, *Fortsetzung und Ergänzungen zu Christian Gottlieb Jöchers allgemeinen Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 7 vols. (Leipzig, Delmenhorst, and Bremen, 1784-1897; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1960-61).
- Jonsius J. Jonsius, *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae libri IV*, 2nd edn, rev. and enl., ed. J. C. Dornius, with a Preface by B. G. Struve, 2 vols. (Jena, 1716; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1968).
- JS *Journal des sçavans*, founded by Denis de Sallo, 170 vols. to 1753 (Amsterdam, 1665-).
- Morhof, *Polybistor literarius* D. G. Morhof, *Polybistor, literarius, philosophicus, et practicus*, 4th edn, with additions by J. Frick and J. Möller and a Preface by J. Fabricius, 2 vols. in 3 pts. (Lübeck, 1747), Vol. 1, pt. 1.
- Morhof, *Polybistor philosophicus* D. G. Morhof, *Polybistor, literarius, philosophicus, et practicus*, Vol. II, pt. 2.
- Morhof, *Polybistor practicus* D. G. Morhof, *Polybistor, literarius, philosophicus, et practicus*, Vol. II, pt. 3.
- MT *Mémoires de Trévoux* (*Mémoires pour l'histoire des sciences et des beaux-arts*), 878 pts. in 265 vols. (Trévoux, Lyons, and Paris, 1701-67).
- NB *Neue Bibliothec oder Nachricht und Urtheile von neuen Büchern*, ed. N. J. Gundling, 11 vols. (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1709-21).
- Nicéron J.-P. Nicéron et al., *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la République des Lettres*, 43 vols. (Paris, 1729-45).
- NL *Nouvelles littéraires*, ed. H. du Sauzet et al., 12 vols. (The Hague, 1715-20).
- NRL *Nouvelles de la république des lettres*, ed. P. Bayle until Feb. 1687, 56 vols. (Amsterdam, 1684-1718).
- Ortloff J. A. Ortloff, *Handbuch der Literatur der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Erlangen, 1798; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1967).
- PhT *Philosophical Transactions*, 70 vols. to 1780 (London, 1665- ; facs. repr. New York, 1963).
- Saxe C. Saxe, *Onomasticon literarium, sive nomenclator historico-criticus*, 8 pts. (Trier, 1775-1803), pt. 4 (1782).
- Stolle G. Stolle, *Introductio in historiam litterariam in gratiam cultorum elegantiorum litterarum et philosophiae conscripta*, 1 vol. in 3 pts. (Jena, 1728).
- Struve B. G. Struve, *Bibliothecae Struvianae emendatae, continuatae atque ultra dimidiam partem auctae a L. M. Kablio*, 2 vols. (Göttingen, 1740; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1970).

B) MODERN SCHOLARLY LITERATURE :
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SURVEYS, BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARIES,
PERIODICALS, CRITICAL STUDIES
(NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES)

- ADB *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, 56 vols. (Leipzig and Munich, 1875-1912).
 AGPh *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* (Berlin, 1888-).
 Balsamo L. Balsamo, *Introduzione all bibliografia* (Parma, 1978).
 Banfi A. Banfi, 'Concetto e sviluppo della storiografia filosofica', in id., *La ricerca della realtà*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1959), Vol. 1, pp. 101-67; previously published in *Civiltà moderna*, v (1933), pp. 392-427, 552-66.
 Bernardini-Righi A. Bernardini and G. Righi, *Il concetto di filologia e di cultura classica nel pensiero moderno* (Bari, 1947).
 Braun L. Braun, *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie* (Paris, 1973).
 BUAM *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, ed. Michaud, 2nd edn, 45 vols. (Paris, 1843-[65]).
 Buhle J. G. Buhle, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie und einer kritischen Literatur derselben*, 8 vols. in 9 (Göttingen, 1796-1804).
 DBI *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 40 vols. to date (Rome, 1960-).
 Degérando J. M. Degérando, *Histoire comparée des systèmes de philosophie, relativement aux principes des connaissances humaines*, 2nd edn, rev., corr., and augmented, 8 vols. (Paris, 1822), Vol. 1.
 Del Torre M. A. Del Torre, *Le origini moderne della storiografia filosofica* (Florence, 1976).
 de Rémusat C. de Rémusat, *Histoire de la philosophie en Angleterre, depuis Bacon jusqu'à Locke*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1875).
 DHI *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, ed. P. P. Wiener, 5 vols. (New York, 1968-73).
 Dibon P. Dibon, *La philosophie néerlandaise au siècle d'or*, Vol. 1: *L'enseignement philosophique dans les universités à l'époque précartésienne (1575-1650)* (Amsterdam and Paris, 1954).
 DNB *Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 vols. (London, 1908-9).
 DSB *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, ed. C. C. Gillespie, 14 vols. (New York, 1970-76).
 DThC *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15 vols. (Paris, 1909-72).
 EC *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols. (Vatican City, 1948-54).
 EF *Enciclopedia filosofica*, 2nd edn, 6 vols. (Florence, 1967).
 EI *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 36 vols. (Rome, 1949-52).
 Franck *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, dir. A. Franck, 2nd edn (Paris, 1875).
 Freyer J. Freyer, *Geschichte der Philosophie im achtzehnten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1912).
 Fueter E. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*, 3rd edn (Munich and Berlin 1936; facs. repr. New York and London, 1968).
 GAF *Grande antologia filosofica*, 31 vols. (Milan, 1954-78).
 Garin E. Garin, *Storia della filosofia italiana*, 3 vols. (Turin, 1966).
 GCFI *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (Rome and Florence, 1920-).

- Hirsch *Biographisches Lexikon der hervorragenden Ärzte aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. A. Hirsch, 5 vols. (Berlin and Vienna, 1929-34).
- Hurter H. Hurter, *Nomenclator literarius theologiae catholicae*, 3rd edn, 5 vols. (Vol. v divided into 2 pts.) (Innsbruck, 1903-13).
- Jasenas M. Jasenas, *A History of the Bibliography of Philosophy* (Hildesheim and New York, 1973).
- JHI *Journal of the History of Ideas* (Lancaster, Pa., and New York, 1940-).
- Kunitz-Haycraft S. J. Kunitz and H. Haycraft, *British Authors before 1800: A Biographical Dictionary*, 4th edn (New York, 1965).
- Malclès L. N. Malclès, *La bibliographie*, *Que sais-je?*, no. 708, 4th edn (Paris, 1977).
- Malusa, 'Interpretazione' L. Malusa, 'Sul ruolo del concetto di interpretazione nella storiografia filosofica tra il Seicento ed il Settecento', in *Storiografia ed ermeneutica: Atti del XIX Convegno di assistenti universitari di filosofia, Padova 1974* (Padua, 1975), pp. 117-34.
- Malusa, 'Origini' L. Malusa, 'Le origini moderne della storia della filosofia: Osservazioni sulla "storia critica della filosofia" tra Seicento e Settecento', in *Storiografia e filosofia del linguaggio*, ed. C. Giacon (Padua, 1975), pp. 3-41.
- NDB *Neue deutsche Biographie*, 29 vols. to date (Berlin, 1953-).
- Petersen P. Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie im protestantischen Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1921; facs. repr. Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, 1964).
- Pfeiffer R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850* (Oxford, 1976).
- Rak M. Rak, *La parte istorica: Storia della filosofia e libertinismo erudito* (Naples, 1971).
- RCSF *Rivista [critica] di storia della filosofia* (Milan, 1946-).
- Saitta G. Saitta, *Il pensiero italiano nell'Umanesimo e nel Rinascimento*, Vol. 1: *L'Umanesimo*, Vols. II-III: *Il Rinascimento* (Florence, 1961).
- Sandys J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, 2nd edn, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1906-8).
- Schmitt, 'Perennial Philosophy' C. B. Schmitt, 'Perennial Philosophy: From Agostino Steuco to Leibniz', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, xxvii (1966), pp. 505-32; repr. in id. *Studies in Renaissance Philosophy and Science* (London, 1981), no. 1.
- Schmitt, 'Prisca Theologia' C. B. Schmitt, "'Prisca Theologia" e "Philosophia Perennis": Due temi del Rinascimento italiano e la loro fortuna', in *Il pensiero italiano del Rinascimento e il tempo nostro: Atti del V Convegno internazionale del Centro di studi umanistici, Montepulciano, Palazzo Tarugi, 8-13 agosto 1968*, ed. G. Tarugi (Florence, 1970), pp. 211-36; repr. in Schmitt, *Studies in Renaissance Philosophy and Science* (London, 1981), no. 2.
- Sommervogel *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, new edn by C. Sommervogel, Pt. 1, Vols. 1-x (Brussels and Paris, 1890-1909); Pt. II, Vol. XI (Paris, 1932); Suppl., Vol. XII (Toulouse, 1911-30; facs. repr. of the whole, Louvain, 1960).
- Sortais G. Sortais, *La philosophie moderne depuis Bacon jusqu'à Leibniz*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1920-22).

- SSGF *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia*, ed. G. Santinello, Vol. 11: *Dall'età cartesiana a Brucker*, by F. Bottin, M. Longo, and G. Piaia (Brescia, 1979).
- Tennemann W. G. Tennemann, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 11 vols. (Leipzig, 1798–1819).
- Van Der Aa *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden*, by A. J. Van Der Aa, 21 vols. (Haarlem, 1852–78).
- Wilamowitz U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *History of Classical Scholarship*, trans. of *Geschichte der Philologie* by A. Harris, ed. with Intro. and notes by H. Lloyd-Jones (London, 1982).
- Wiley B. Wiley, *The Seventeenth-Century Background: Studies in the Thought of the Age* (London, 1934; repr. 1986).
- Wundt M. Wundt, *Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 1939).
- Yates F. A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London, 1964).

FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

Interest in the history of the history of philosophy is not new. As early as the seventeenth century, when the field began to be clearly defined as an historical genre, historians of philosophy listed and commented on their predecessors: Jonsius wrote the first work on the topic and after him surveys appeared in Morhof, Brucker, Tennemann, and Cousin. For these four the topic was an important preliminary survey for a more intensive study of the history of philosophy itself — thus the history of the discipline was not the major focus. Jonsius' study was unique as the first and only study of ancient and Renaissance sources for the history of philosophy in the seventeenth century. After the early nineteenth century the subject seems to have dropped from view, but recently a change has occurred. Between 1973 and 1984, three histories of the history of philosophy were begun: Lucien Braun's *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie* (1973), Giovanni Santinello's *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia* (1979–), and last Marcel Gueroult's *Dianoématique: Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie* (3 vols.; 1984–88). Gueroult's work had the longest gestation: volumes I and II began as lectures on the history of the history of philosophy at the Collège de France between 1933 and 1938. Santinello's *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia*, here translated into English under the title of *Models of the History of Philosophy*, is the most ambitious and complete effort, describing the field from the Renaissance to the end of the nineteenth century. When completed it will comprise five volumes in all, of which three volumes have been published to date in the Italian.

It is no accident that the history of the history of philosophy has been studied with renewed vigour in the last forty years. As Bréhier says in his seminal introductory survey of the field of the history of philosophy which introduced his *Histoire de la philosophie* (1926), a new methodological approach that rejected Comtian and Hegelian constructs was necessary if a clear and philosophically useful study of the history of philosophy was to

be made (Bréhier, p. 10). Almost fifty years later, in 1974, Braun set out a similar point of view in his introduction to his *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie*, stating that he would not impose an 'idea' on the historical text, as post-Kantian philosophers had done, but would examine the texts themselves (Braun, p. 4). The general editor and originator of the Italian project, Giovanni Santinello, was motivated by the same anti-idealist impulse. In the later 1950s, as he explains in his 'Autopresentazione', Santinello found that through the practice of the historiography of philosophy, which was at that time a branch of philology, "it was possible to bring about a severe critique of the categories that had been typical of the idealist modes of thought in Italy, and substitute for them a positive methodology which could be integrated within the historical sciences" ('Autopresentazione', pp. 260-67). *Models of the History of Philosophy* is organized as a critical, historical study of philosophical texts and sets out the work of each historian of a general history of philosophy for further scrutiny and study.

While Bréhier, Braun, Gueroult, and Santinello are united in their rejection of *a priori* theories, they take approaches that are complementary in many ways. Bréhier introduces the topic for serious consideration; Braun studies with great sensitivity how the various philosophical texts were read by historians of philosophy between the Renaissance and the mid nineteenth century; and Gueroult examines how the major philosophers evaluated and used the past of their discipline in their philosophy. Where they differ is in their assessment of the discussions on the history of philosophy by humanists and philosophers between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries. As a result, each has a very different description of the contribution of early modern philosophy to the history of philosophy and a distinct view as to how Western philosophy developed the way it did. By and large the three French works define real philosophy to be only the work of those who developed complete and original philosophical systems such as that of Descartes and do not find the earlier writings, which they classify as 'literary', 'philological', or 'humanistic' in character, to be conducive either to philosophy or to the history of philosophy. The Italian work, basing itself on Italian, English, and American scholarship on the Renaissance by Garin, Kristeller, Walker, and Schmitt, has a radically different approach — Renaissance texts are read thematically, and as a result sources for later developments in the history of philosophy are found in texts which might seem in other ways incomplete. Thus, in this volume, Malusa finds much in Renaissance texts that makes substantial contributions to the history of philosophy.

This disagreement among the historiographers of philosophy raises one of the key questions in the study of the history of a discipline — When can the discipline be said to have started? Jonsius, Morhof, and Brucker all include literature from the Renaissance in their surveys, and it is only with Tenenmann that the category of general history of philosophy is imposed on the

literature and Renaissance texts are excluded. How to assess this earlier literature troubles all three French historians. Although they each begin their discussions of the early modern period with the Renaissance, for Bréhier and Braun the period from the fifteenth through the seventeenth century is not a fertile one. Bréhier made two basic objections to the earlier historians of philosophy: either they were too philological or they adhered to the allegiances of one of the Greek philosophical sects. Study of the history of individual sects by its partisans resulted in a fragmentation of thought which eventually drove philosophers to adopt a philosophical Scepticism. For Bréhier, the recovery of Sextus Empiricus merely reinforced this tendency. The fact that the information about ancient philosophy could have been an important source for the history of philosophy and for philosophy itself was disregarded. Rather the interest in Scepticism is seen as a symptom of the poor state of sixteenth-century philosophical scholarship. One product of this sceptical reaction was Guy de Brûés's *Les dialogues contre les nouveaux academiciens* (Paris, 1557) (Bréhier, Vol. 1, pp. 11-15).

Braun gives a much more detailed consideration of the problem placing Renaissance history of philosophy within the writing in the field since the Greeks. He classifies the history of philosophy into six periods, 'histoire naïve' (antiquity), 'histoire érudite' (the fifteenth to the mid seventeenth century), 'histoire pragmatique' (the late seventeenth to the mid eighteenth century), 'histoire de la philosophie comme progrès' (the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century), 'histoire de la philosophie à l'heure du criticisme' (the early nineteenth century), and 'la vision Romantique de l'histoire de la philosophie' (the mid nineteenth century). In this classification, ancient and Renaissance history of philosophy are grouped together under the title of 'histoire pratique', and the later history of philosophy subsumed under the general title, 'discipline': it is only in these later periods that the history of philosophy is thought to have come into being. According to Braun, the ancients practised a history of philosophy which was 'naïve' (without proper procedures) — they collected sentences, proverbs, maxims, and opinions of philosophers and entirely lacked a historical or philosophical genre for the history of philosophy, while the Renaissance did have a technique — that of the philologist not of the philosopher, which was equally unsatisfactory. Braun has a very rigorous definition of how a philologist proceeded in the 'histoire érudite'. He "seeks to reconstitute the ancient text and study it for itself", and "tired by interminable and vain glosses, he finds that the vigorous study of literature not only fixes his attention on a stable subject, but renders the texts in a new and authentic way". This is the way Bruni is seen to have read Aristotle's *Ethics*; Ficino, Plato; and Henri Estienne, Sextus Empiricus. Braun concludes with the comment that the history of philosophy of this period is a "prisoner of the ancients". He cites Giovanni Battista Buoninsegni's *Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*

et eorum inter se differentia as a typical example of this type of narrow reading of texts (which he notes, somewhat scornfully, remained published until 1888, when L. Stein edited it in the *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*). Braun believes the sixteenth century to be no more developed than the fifteenth for two reasons: first, the wars of religion introduced a religious component into philosophy — an influence Braun sees as negative — and second, the recovery of Greek philosophical sects is seen to be the work of philologists. Justus Lipsius is thus reduced to an unphilosophical figure (Braun, pp. 49–57).

Gueroult, on the other hand, finds that the Renaissance history of philosophy did have important consequences for philosophy itself. For example, he describes how the rise of the knowledge of the authentic Aristotle caused the overthrow of Scholasticism, led to a resurrection of all the ancient philosophical sects, and in turn liberated philosophy. “The liberation of philosophy was made by the liberation of its own history, by an insurrection against the constraints of previous centuries and by an effort to return to the original text”. Even though Gueroult does not think of this effort as mere philology, it also was not really beneficial, resulting in the flowering of the “false Plato”, the “false Aristotle”, the “false Epicurus”. This distortion of ancient philosophers was caused also by a literary impulse, coming not from philologists this time, but from the humanists who were interested in “neither theology, logic, nor science, but aesthetic pleasure and refinement of taste” (Gueroult, Vol. 1, pp. 133–8).

But Gueroult does not claim that the humanistic movement was the only one in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was another — the encyclopaedic impulse, which drove Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Campanella, and da Vinci — caused by passionate curiosity. This resulted in a lack of philosophic order, a multiplicity of sects, and a fragmentation of thought that ended with a sceptical reaction. It first produced Gianfrancesco Pico de la Mirandola, then the edition of Sextus Empiricus by Estienne and the translation by Hervet, Montaigne, and the fideism of Pierre Bayle. Importantly, this Scepticism had a very real impact, dividing into two different types of Sceptics, that of Montaigne and Descartes, who rejected tradition for human reason, and that of Huet, who denied Cartesian reason and accepted faith because of the weakness of human reason. This Scepticism also helped to release philosophy from its history (*ibid.*, pp. 140–46), which Gueroult believed to be necessary for the development of modern philosophy.

The reduction of the reading of ancient philosophical texts during the Renaissance to the work of mere philology or a humanist aesthetic has ominous echoes in the literature of the history of philosophy. One is reminded immediately of Hegel’s famous characterization of Renaissance philosophy, a period he placed in the same category as medieval philosophy:

But the revival of the arts and sciences, and especially of the study of

ancient literature bearing on Philosophy, was at first in some measure a simple revival of the old philosophy in its earlier and original form, without anything new being added; this working up of old philosophies, to which a great number of writings were devoted, was thus the restoration of something forgotten only. . . . Thus it was partly the old Platonic philosophy that was sought out, and partly the Neoplatonic, as also the Aristotelian and Stoic, the Epicurean — as far as it regarded physics — and the popular philosophy of Cicero in its first form; these were brought forward as authorities against Scholasticism, being in direct contradiction to it. Such endeavours are, however, connected rather with the history of literature and culture, and with the advancement of the same; we do not find originality in this philosophic work, nor can we recognize therein any forward step (Hegel, *Lectures on The History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simpson (London, 1896), Vol. III, pp. 109–10).

In his Introduction to the *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 1–2, Charles Schmitt remarked that Renaissance philosophy had disappeared from the history of philosophy after Jacob Brucker's 800-page volume on the topic in his *Historia critica philosophiae*, published in 1744. My own research over the last five years has revealed that Brucker himself contributed to this by defining the successful philosopher as one who had written a complete and original system of philosophy. Brucker called him an 'eclectic' — and thus by implication disqualified the bulk of Renaissance philosophy. Brucker, moreover, discriminated against the philosophers of the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, whom he described as following former philosophical sects, placing them in a single volume, and criticizing them for following the philosophical systems of others and not thinking independently. He then grouped others — Cardano, Campanella, Bruno, Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, and Leibniz, in another volume, and praised them for their originality. After that, future historians of philosophy like Tennemann, who were interested in tracing the progress of philosophy in their histories, simply passed over the period without examining it in detail. (See C. W. T. Blackwell, 'The Creation of the Myth of the Renaissance Eccentric Genius: The Case of Cardano'; ead., 'The Jesuits and the Historiography of Renaissance Aristotelianism'.) The French historians of the history of philosophy, Bréhier, Braun, and Guerout, are in various ways heirs to the definition of successful philosophizing as the ability to create an original and complete philosophical system, an approach that has advantages and disadvantages. In this case, while it points toward the major changes in philosophy of the seventeenth century, it tends to overlook trends in less monumental texts.

The rescue of Renaissance philosophy from Brucker's disqualification, of which Hegel's was but a faithful echo, with its reduction of two hundred

years of philosophic effort to 'mere' literature has taken over a hundred years. As Schmitt has pointed out, it began in the nineteenth century in France and Italy with the work of Renan, Mabilleau, Fiorentino, Tocco, and Amabile. (It should be noted that all of the Renaissance philosophers were selected because they represented an anti-clerical or libertine religious or philosophical position.) Their research was added to in the first years of this century by Gentile, who wrote on Bruno and Telesio. But, for Schmitt, it was Ernst Cassirer, "whose massive *Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neueren Zeit* tried for the first time to trace the rise of modern philosophical concerns to the period of the Renaissance", who made people read the texts in a different way. (Schmitt, *Cambridge History*, p. 2.). The recovery of Renaissance philosophy continued with the scholarship of Garin and Kristeller, both of whom firmly established Renaissance philosophy as an intellectually sophisticated and important field of study and led to the first complete overview of Renaissance philosophy as a philosophical system in the collection of articles in *The Cambridge History* edited by Schmitt, Skinner, and Kessler.

In the last twenty years, work done on those authors who between 1400 and 1700 recovered, commented on, and wrote philosophy in relation to ancient philosophical texts has opened up our understanding of the philosopher of that period. As Eckhard Kessler has pointed out, the problem of philology versus philosophy began early with Petrarch, who was fond of the quotation from Seneca: "The study of wisdom has become the study of words (*quae philosophia fuit facta philologia est*)" (Seneca, *Ad Lucilium epistulae morales* 108. 23-4; Kessler, 'Petrarcas Philologie', pp. 110-11). The work of Schmitt on the history of Renaissance Aristotelianism, *Aristotle in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1983), and the recovery of ancient Scepticism has demonstrated the profound impact such a reading had on the redirection of Renaissance philosophy for Renaissance Aristotelianism and Scepticism, while the work of Anthony Grafton has pointed out the transforming power of philology for the matter of natural science.

The systematic study of Renaissance texts as evidence for the history of philosophy began in Italy in the 1970s with the research for *Models of the History of Philosophy*. Malusa carefully and sensitively read the writings of fifteenth-century Italian humanists and philosophers and painstakingly reconstructed their thought, while Tolomio did the same for the seventeenth-century Dutch philologists. Although, like the French historians of philosophy, they find Thomas Stanley's *History of Philosophy* a landmark in the field, and they end the second volume of their work with a consideration of Brucker's *Historia critica philosophiae* (1742-4), the Italian historians of philosophy raise two different and new historical questions.

First: What were the various discussions about the origins and development of philosophy, what caused the philosophical canon to develop, and

how and why did it change? This is a question of importance for historians of culture, religion, and science as well. One aspect of this question — Did philosophy arise in the East and then move to Greece? — is still under debate by leading historians of science, as four articles in *Isis* (1992) illustrate. The evidence that has been found is clearly set out here in *Models*. Renaissance scholars examining the origins of the history of philosophy transformed the field by the questions they asked. Nowhere is this more evident than in Malusa's research on the earlier history of how Diogenes Laertius was read and on the Renaissance variations on the theme of the 'prisca theologia', which builds on earlier research by D. P. Walker and Charles Schmitt. Malusa, Micheli, Tolomio, and Santinello do not ask when real philosophical thinking began, but how its origins developed and how the history of philosophy was told.

Second: What was the influence of religious belief on historians of philosophy? The question of the role of religion is a difficult and a very embarrassing topic for many historians of philosophy. On the whole, historians of philosophy either have been trying to create a religion out of their field (like Hegel and Croce), or have been apologists for religion (like Gilson), or have omitted the subject altogether. Recent scholarship proves that, when properly studied, religious concerns can elucidate philosophical problems. In the United States during the last thirty years the question of the religious motivations of philosophers has been incorporated fruitfully into the study of the history of Scepticism and seventeenth-century philosophy by the groundbreaking scholarship of Richard Popkin. Malusa underlines the importance of religion for the recovery of Scepticism in the sixteenth century. Interestingly, he finds that the Scepticism developed by Gianfrancesco Pico did not cause a rejection of the history of philosophy but aided in its development. "Sextus Empiricus became a precious source because it was he who suggested a way of analyzing the philosophy of the past" (see below, p. 48). Religion also is seen to influence philosophy in the seventeenth century. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the article in this volume on Jakob Thomasius by Giovanni Santinello. By examining Thomasius' attacks on the atheism of Greek philosophy, Santinello brings to the fore the philosophical concerns of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers and raises questions for Leibniz scholars, while Micheli's articles on lesser figures describe the type of history of philosophy taught in the universities at the time. These articles prove how important it is to know what questions were asked by the historians of philosophy of the philosophers they were studying and teaching to their students.

By focusing on the origins of the history of philosophy and the periodization of the discipline, as well as by compiling a detailed bibliography of each figure, the scholars of Padua have opened the whole field for further study. The history of philosophy is seen to have grown out of a constant reworking

of the past instead of a rejection of it. Readers will find that minor, as well as major, figures are discussed, and before they skip over the minor figures they should stop to remember that these works may well have been more widely read than the writings of philosophers who are more famous today. Leibniz, along with hundreds of other German students of philosophy, studied what Jakob Thomasius wrote, and Brucker was read by Kant, Diderot, Hegel, Tennemann, Coleridge, Cousin, and Goethe. Yet who now knows about, let alone reads Thomasius, and what strong soul dips into Brucker's six volumes of a thousand pages each, or knows what he has to say about 'prisca theologia', Scepticism, the Renaissance, or Plato?

Protestant and Catholic texts are studied with equal care and each national tradition in the history of philosophy is set out — Italian, French, English, and German. Such a research project could only have been done by a team. Giovanni Santinello initiated the project in the middle of the 1970s together with I. F. Baldo, F. Bottin, M. Longo, L. Malusa, G. Micheli, G. Piaia, and I. Tolomio. In the early years they met every two weeks to share their research, and as a result, although this volume has been written by four scholars and Vol. 11 by three, both are integrated and co-ordinated efforts. The success of the project is due above all to the intellectual imagination as well as the sharpness of mind and unusually balanced historical vision of one man: Giovanni Santinello. As he has said:

I am convinced — and have attempted to demonstrate — that this aspect of the history of the history of philosophy re-examines and puts into great relief the 'historicity' — the historical character — of every act of interpretation, without thereby dissolving the reality of the texts themselves and beyond these texts, the reality of the mentalities, or personalities of the individual philosophers with our interpretative activity . . . This is not a pretext for simply listening to ourselves, but rather it should incite us to confront the diversity and otherness of things different from ourselves — and finally to question ourselves in order to understand ourselves better. It is in this that historical consciousness consists — a consciousness we find from the time of the humanists onwards ('Autopresentazione', p. 272).

This vast project has been going on for almost twenty years. The University of Padua has a long, proud and independent tradition in the study of philosophy. It is only right that such a major effort that looks at Catholic as well as Protestant works in the clear, objective, yet sympathetic light of history should have come out of such a University. It is hoped that this English translation will encourage English speakers — be they historians of culture, religion, or philosophy — to share and join in this scholarship.

C. W. T. BLACKWELL
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The introduction of the *Models of the History of Philosophy* to the English speaking world began with the memorable review, 'The Totality of Worlds', by Charles B. Schmitt, in the *Times Literary Supplement* (6 May 1983), p. 463, which announced the publication of this major work of Italian scholarship. There he underscored the primary importance of the history of philosophy to philosophy itself, when he noted that the history of philosophy only began to be the focus of interest for philosophers when the Aristotelian encyclopaedia effectively collapsed, and philosophers turned to the history of philosophy to organize their discipline. The project of translating such a complex work into English would never have occurred without the initial and important encouragement of P. O. Kristeller. But it is thanks to Richard Popkin that the project became a reality when he introduced the Editor to Kluwer Academic Publishers. It is only right that three scholars so central to scholarship in the history of philosophy in England and the United States should have backed the translation into English of a work that sets out the field of the history of philosophy as never before.

The actual translation project was developed with the full cooperation and help of the original team in Padua under the direction of Giovanni Santinello. The English translators were initially trained by Letizia Panizza who brought to bear her years of experience teaching Italian translation at Royal Holloway New College, University of London. The successful completion of the project is due to the great dedication and enthusiasm that my Associate Editor, Philip Weller, gave. His ear for language and a respect for the subtleties of Italian and Latin connotations were essential to the final editing of the text. We have both carefully read and edited the translations, working to respect the original terminology of the Italian and the same time render the text into idiomatic English. This has not been always an easy task, since many of the Italian words used still retain a meaning close to their Latin original, and unfortunately these rich connotations are often lost in the process of translation. We have worked as a team: the Editor has brought the bibliography up to date, the Associate Editor with the aid of Alan Cameron has ensured the accuracy of the translation from Italian of the list of names in the Index, and Alan Cameron has worked with great care compiling the Index. Anne Russell-Roberts, Alan Cameron, and Gwyneth Weston have been the translators for the Italian, while the Latin was translated by Mary Ann Rossi and Leofranc Holford-Strevens. Jeffrey Dean of The Stingray Office has not only typeset the text, designing it to follow the clear page design of the Italian edition, but has served as another eye, checking that what has been written is clear English and making very helpful comments on the translations of both the Italian and Latin (for which

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PREFACE TO THE ITALIAN EDITION

When the Kantian philosopher Tennemann, observing that the very concept of the history of philosophy is in itself a compound notion, proceeded to give an analysis (*Zergliederung*) that reduced it, with great simplicity and an intuitive sense of clarity, to the two distinct notions of 'history' and 'philosophy', he brought into sharp focus a basic interlinking of ideas that is fundamental to an understanding of the theoretical aspects of the historiography of philosophy. For us who have since witnessed the philosophies of Hegel and of nineteenth-century positivism, followed in the present century by the Hegelian renaissance, neo-positivism, and historical materialism, it is evident that the intersection of these two ideas (history and philosophy) remains a problem of crucial importance.

Theoreticians of the historiography of philosophy have long discussed and continue to debate the problem, and show every sign of continuing to do so for a good while yet. This has not, however, impeded the work of historians of philosophy. Indeed, they seem rather to have been stimulated to demonstrate how much, in theory, still remains open to discussion and debate. In many ways it would appear as if a tacit agreement had been reached between these scholars to join forces in a project of mutual collaboration, even if — over and above whatever research may have been satisfactorily accomplished — they cannot, as theorists, be entirely at peace with each other.

One possible way of clarifying the problems involved in writing the history of philosophy would be to trace its own history — in other words, to describe the evolution, or historical course, of the historiography of philosophy. For Tennemann this would represent an idea of greater complexity. It would constitute, as has been suggested, a further historical dimension or standpoint from which to consider the history of philosophy — or, if you will, a historical meta-discourse whose object is the discourse of the historian of philosophy.

For example, a bibliographical survey of works on Plato, listed in chronological order, would constitute in itself an example of the history of the historiography of philosophy. If moreover such a survey were drawn up as a *bibliographie raisonnée*, then the criteria governing its compilation and internal divisions would also articulate and give shape to the historical structure. As a result, the straightforward sequence of titles would be transformed into significant groupings of works in much the same way as the application of criteria for periodization would confer a sense of movement and development, as well as of differentiated historical levels, on what would otherwise remain a simple chronicle. This bibliographical work could be further refined and elaborated so as to present a true history of images of Plato as transmitted through the ages. It could be argued whether or not such an account of the images of Plato throughout history would coincide with what might be called the historical reception — the *fortuna* — of Plato. One might wish to dispute the claim that they do coincide by observing that only the former could properly be said to belong to the historiography of Plato, while the latter is in reality a history of Platonism. A historian of the Platonic reception could never deny, for example, that Neoplatonism is indeed a crucial aspect of Plato's *fortuna*; but studies of the Neoplatonists should, strictly speaking, be excluded from any bibliography which is specifically devoted to Plato himself, and any account of the historical images of Plato should not be extended to include the distorted image of him that emerges from the work of Plotinus or of Proclus.

At this point, however, the question easily becomes controversial. The particular model of writing the history of the historiography of philosophy that we have so far used as an example is shaped chiefly by its object of study — namely, the figure of Plato. We shall discover as we proceed that the very diversity of the images of Plato throughout history has been to a large extent determined by the intellectual tools and methods used in the works consulted, by the convictions of individual historians (not only in relation to Plato himself or even to philosophy in general, but also to historiography), and by the fact that they belonged to a particular culture at a definite period. Leaving aside their common theme — that is, the figure of Plato — we might focus on methods, attitudes, forms, and approaches to the writing of history. These in turn could become the object of historical enquiry, and such a method of study would provide another way, rather different from the first, of charting the course of the history of the historiography of philosophy.

This is in turn linked to a third way, that of writing the history of historiographical genres — for there are more of these than simply that of the monograph (that is, a study of the work of a single author). From the time of the Renaissance there was a growing interest in historical 'tendencies' or 'movements' — in other words, the ancient philosophical sects. Justus Lipsius

for instance, to cite only one famous example, provides us with a history of Stoic thought. And the motivating impulse of religious interests reached beyond the limits of classical culture to embrace the earlier history of non-Greek or of Jewish philosophy — ultimately to arrive, via these other routes, at the original point of divine revelation where God first communicated truth to Man. An intellectual approach dominated by the consideration of one specific, well-defined problem or philosophical theme, studied in detail within a particular era, prompted scholars to investigate the historical dimension of any given topic or area of study. This resulted in histories of Aristotelian metaphysics, of logic, of ethics, or of natural law; Johann Budde (Buddeus) wrote a history of atheism — and so on. The history of the historiography of philosophy by genres also includes that special genre which might be called the ‘general history’ of philosophy: in other words, those comprehensive studies of broad scope whose purpose was to cover large areas of philosophical history, more or less wide-ranging in extent — or even on occasion to encompass philosophy in its entirety, from Adam *ad nostram usque aetatem*.

It would be reasonable to assume that such encyclopaedic, all-embracing studies originated and flourished in the erudite intellectual culture of poly-history in the seventeenth century. This is partly true, but does not tell the full story. For already during the Renaissance we find examples of such general histories (or better, those comprehensive accounts which may in some sense be considered their equivalent) which were prompted by the humanists’ interest in the world of classical antiquity and the historicization of that world. Moreover, the composition of such general histories of philosophy continued well beyond the world of seventeenth-century erudition and scholarship, surviving through the Enlightenment and the historicism of the nineteenth century down to our own time. This would seem to indicate that the genre was motivated not merely by a spirit of encyclopaedic erudition, nor even by the purely scholastic need for didactic manuals suitable for the academic teaching of philosophy. Clearly, it is not only with Hegel that it becomes possible to say that a certain ‘philosophy’ of the historiography of philosophy underlies the various surveys or general histories, governing their methodology and determining their final aim.

Within the wide spectrum of possibilities offered by the history of philosophical historiography, this study proposes then to consider the genre of general histories of philosophy. In so doing, the limitation of confining our investigations to a single genre of literature inevitably runs the risk of making arbitrary selections, for it means isolating and abstracting one particular area from a tautly woven tapestry whose vitality and coherence are ultimately indivisible. Yet the exigencies of research necessarily demand that in some way we define and delimit our scope. Moreover, as we have already seen, our chosen genre displays certain characteristic aspects throughout its historical

course, and deals with a particularly dense and complex set of problems, deriving from the underlying theoretical presuppositions which form the basis of the genre.

Looking at the overall plan of the complete work — which aims to cover, in several volumes, the entire period from the Renaissance to the end of the nineteenth century — it may be observed that this, the first volume of the series, is in part an introduction to the second (*From the Cartesian Age to Brucker*), but is also self-contained and relatively autonomous. The Renaissance origins of the genre are the prelude to the main substance not only of the present volume but also, in a way, of all the others. The expression *historia philosophica* is encountered frequently in a number of the most important works — in those of Georg Horn (Hornius) or Jakob Thomasius for example; and, in English, in the *History of Philosophy* by Thomas Stanley, a classical philologist whose choice of a vernacular rather than a Latin title pointedly emphasized the modernity of his work. The widespread use of this term testifies to the existence of the new genre of the general history of philosophy in Holland, England, and Germany, suggesting that a degree of intellectual autonomy and stability had been reached by this time.

But why should the origins of general histories of philosophy be traced back to the Renaissance, rather than to classical antiquity? To reduce what would otherwise involve a long and intricate argument to a brief observation, let it be said that, for our purposes, such a celebrated and representative work as the *Lives of the Philosophers* of Diogenes Laertius becomes relevant only at the point when it is discovered, studied, translated and imitated in the light of the highly evolved historical awareness and understanding of the humanists. On the other hand, in certain passages of the *Sophist* where Plato refers to the “myths” or “stories” told by the “Eleatic school who trace their descentance from Xenophanes and from even more remote times” and by certain “Ionian and, more recently, Sicilian muses”, he has a precise end in view: his aim is to discover whether “one of these [individuals] has said true things or not” — even if, immediately afterwards, Plato respectfully adds that “it would be difficult and out of place to level criticism or reproof at men so venerable and illustrious on matters of such importance”.

This serves to show that the difficult and often disputed historical references made by Plato always have a theoretical function, connected with the vigorous discussion of the problem of being — a discussion which, in a passage of the *Sophist* (245E–246B), he represents as a battle fought among the Giants, (the so-called Gigantomachia). A similar theoretical function can in turn be seen to motivate and inform some of the most lucid and straightforwardly discursive pages of Aristotle — certain passages in the first book of the *Metaphysics*, in the *Physics*, or in *De anima*, for example — where the recounting of the opinions of the ancients (relegated, let it be noted, to the rank of ‘opinion’, as Aquinas observed in his commentaries to the *Meta-*

physics and *De anima*) does not conceal the analytical and evaluative nature of Aristotle's procedure, and his aspiration to arrive at a synthesis which only in his own theory acquires the status and significance of truth. In the case both of Aristotle and of Diogenes Laertius, such passages are treated quite differently by the Renaissance humanists: in the work of many Aristotelians the sections devoted to the 'opinions of the ancients' show a notable degree of autonomy and independence from the rest of the text, and the interests of historical scholarship tend to predominate over those of philosophical theory. Or, at least, they result in elementary didactic accounts whose function is clearly propaedeutic or 'institutional' in nature when compared with the main theoretical exposition and discussion.

By the end of ancient philosophical thought the only genres to have emerged, as Braun observed, were those of 'doxography', 'biography', and 'diadochism' — that is, the recording of the opinions and the lives of the philosophers, and the tracing of traditions and patterns of influence; whereas the outcome of Renaissance humanist thought was, precisely, the 'historia philosophica' and the *histoire critique*.

On the other hand, it would be wrong to consider only the 'modern' origins of the critical history of philosophy, and to neglect the contributions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, even if these were only sporadic and incomplete precursors, for this would entail losing the full richness and variety of the early sources of inspiration — the antecedents to which the final emergence of general histories in the modern period was deeply indebted.

For all these reasons the present volume begins with an extensive introduction, divided into two sections. The first section gives ample space to an account of the groundwork done by the humanists towards the creation and elaboration of a unified and comprehensive plan of the ancient philosophical schools; but it leaves room also for schemes based more on a theoretical than on a scholarly view of the history of human thought. It is not possible for this picture to be complete, nor is it intended to be so. It provides only a few studies and essays drawn from what appear to be the sources of inspiration for an approach to the writing of the history of philosophy. First of all, there is the discipline of philological scholarship — animated, however, by a particular view of history that is deeply characteristic of the humanists' relationship to the past. This is the underlying impulse which motivated, in the fifteenth century, certain passages of Leonardo Bruni, the letter (attributed to Bartolomeo Scala) entitled *De nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, the tradition of Diogenes Laertius as established by Traversari, or, in the sixteenth century, the account given by Vives of the philosophical sects of the ancient world. A special place has been accorded to Ficino's investigation of the tradition of a remote and ancient theology, which passed from cultures of the greatest antiquity, across different peoples and epochs, to its culmination in

Plato and Plotinus — and, ultimately, to its revival in Ficino's own time. His studies constitute one of the most potent theoretical impulses that inform and motivate the interest in a comprehensive general history of human thought. Works such as the *De perenni philosophia* of Steuco, or the numerous treatises whose purpose was to establish the common ground between Plato and Aristotle, or between the most diverse thinkers of the past, correspond to a similar attempt to achieve a unified vision of human thought — even if the rhythmic articulation and historical succession of the account tend to be relegated, in such cases, to a secondary role.

But even the opposing theoretical position could provide historiographical interest — namely, scepticism in the face of the vanity of the doctrines of the pagan philosophers, whether the adoption of a sceptical position was inspired and motivated by religious aims, as in the case of Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, or came about in response to an ideal of knowledge of purely secular character, as in Montaigne. Such an attitude of scepticism was often evinced in the study and application (*usus*) of the work of Sextus Empiricus, which represented a valid doxographic source of ancient thought, recording as it did a quantity of philosophical doctrine and opinions. Nor, in the sixteenth century, should we neglect the polemical stance taken up by Protestant thinkers with respect to the Middle Ages and to Scholasticism — an attitude which was a revival, in the religious domain, of a theme well-known to us from the humanist tradition. Yet it gives rise not merely to a straightforward collection of anti-barbarian topoi, but also to a more detailed attempt to re-evaluate the different phases, or periods, of medieval theology and philosophy, and to reconstruct and articulate their succession.

Thus, in the humanist period, impulses came from many different sources towards a more comprehensive study and understanding of ancient thought, both in its historical evolution and its subsequent prolongation, across the darkness and obscurity of the Middle Ages, through to the light of the Renaissance.

The second section of the Introduction deals with works and pivotal instances which touch more directly on, and contribute more decisively towards, the emergence of the genre of the general history of philosophy. Here, too, we have had to choose between many productions of different types, grouping them together in movements or tendencies as seemed most appropriate and revealing, describing an arc in time that runs, in most cases, from the sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. In the vast field of polyhistory, we have given particular attention to those specific areas of research devoted to the study of the philosophers in which certain characteristic problems have been tackled — as for example in the attempt to give voice (whether implicitly or, sometimes, explicitly) to a certain idea and conception of what might be termed 'philosophical culture' as distinct from other areas of historiography; or in the attempt to identify and sketch out historical

periods, a task often implicit in the internal subdivisions outlined by the historian, or in the criteria used by him to establish his chronology.

A further group of writings consists of texts born in the schools, at the very core of philosophical teaching in the universities. In such school texts the space devoted to the opinions of the ancients increases steadily throughout the period: the overall picture, though inspired by the works of Aristotle, is articulated with ever clearer historical intention and interest. The demands of the classroom, and the need for a historical summary that would set out and expound the theoretical problems of philosophy, played a decisive role in determining the origins of general treatises on the history of philosophical thought.

Religious pressures remained influential as motivating forces, particularly those that came from the Protestant side, but also those coming from the Catholics. There were the critical arguments — manifested in the guise of anti-humanist polemic — directed against the pagan philosophy of classical antiquity, and the anti-scholastic debate which obviously remained vigorous among the Protestants. And the search for philosophical understanding was often pursued, well beyond the usual limits of the classical area, among the non-Greek philosophers, because it was thought possible to discover, even in the barbarian tradition, scattered traces of the original revelation of divine wisdom. All these motivations resulted in contributions of very diverse character, in which the authors set out to draw broad and all-encompassing pictures of the evolution of human thought. Here too we have chosen to proceed by exemplification using the most trenchant and significant models, but we have not made any attempt at complete coverage.

Finally, it must be realized that the continuing anti-Aristotelian polemic, pursued with different aims and on different fronts during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, tended to favour the recovery and reappropriation of the thought of other philosophical sects (atomism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, scepticism, and so on) — and that the exposition of such thought often gave occasion for a great many historical references about the different sects themselves and their relation to the rest of ancient thought. Works such as those of Justus Lipsius, Magnen, Bérigard and Gassendi frequently show both a historical intention and awareness of great precision and a broad overall plan of vast general scope.

This two-part Introduction serves as a long route by which to approach the formation of the genre which is the main object of the present study. However, proper general histories of philosophy are not met with immediately in this preparatory phase — and for this reason the account given in the Introduction remains distinct from the overall plan and is allowed to proceed with a certain freedom.

In the rest of the book, by contrast, the analysis of the proper general histories of philosophy follows a fixed pattern. There are two Parts, each of

which is subdivided into chapters (with continuous numbering throughout). Within each chapter there is an Introduction which gives a broad outline of the period under consideration, and links it to the philosophical and historiographical activity of its time and context. This is followed by sections on each individual author. After a biographical profile and a worklist, a scheme is followed according to which are analysed: (i) the concept of the history of philosophy, as it is manifested in the author's particular speculative approach; (ii) the contents of the historical study under investigation; (iii) the methodological criteria; and (iv) the subsequent *fortuna*, or reception, of the work. Here, then, is the regular scheme followed in every chapter (coming in each case after the Introduction):

- I. Number corresponding to the position of each author within the chapter
 - I.1. Biography of the author
 - I.2. List of his works
 - I.3. His conception of the history of philosophy
 - I.4.1. Description of the external structure of his 'history'
 - I.4.2. Periodization
 - I.4.3. Fundamental historiographical theses
 - I.4.4. Methodological choices
 - I.5. Subsequent reception
 - I.6. Bibliography of works on the author

Stanley and Hornius represent two fixed points towards the middle of the seventeenth century, two points of arrival, of maturity and consolidation of the *historia philosophica*. Stanley acknowledges his affinity to Bacon and Montaigne, to the encyclopaedic vision and to the ethical humanist vision. Hornius refers more explicitly to Bacon and the 'philological century' — that is, the sixteenth century. Hence there is an appeal both to the preparatory philological phase of the humanists and to the new theoretical positions and philosophical assumptions on the part of the authors of *The History of Philosophy* and of the *Historia philosophica*. England was later to produce other immense and all-embracing studies of the history of thought — such as those of Gale and Burnet — within the framework of a particular philosophical movement (as in the case of Cambridge Platonism). The theoretical assumptions of such a philosophy intertwine with the philosophical-theological current which stretches back to Ficino, and with the well-defined idea of historical tradition elaborated in the Renaissance. Yet here too, where the speculative component is more evident, scholarship and 'archaeology' still have a fundamental role to play. The greatest representative of German historiography in the mid-seventeenth century, Jakob Thomasius, was a philosopher who flourished within the Protestant tradition of scholastic Aristotelianism. He saw clearly its limitations and difficulties and he unwittingly contributed to its dissolution and ultimate demise, through the use not

of speculative methods but of historical ones. According to Thomasius, the Aristotelian philosophy of his time was a corruption of the genuine doctrine of Aristotle; but even this doctrine was finally incompatible with revealed truth. Yet it is precisely his historical scholarship that furnishes the main structure of Thomasius' *œuvre* (he was often explicitly referred to as a *poly-histor*) — a scholarship which is put to the service of ecclesiastical history, certainly, but also of theology and philosophy.

Thus we can say that both philological erudition and historiographical scholarship contributed decisively to the emergence of the genre of the general history of philosophy. The motivation of theoretical philosophical questions, of course, remains more or less strongly present and influential. But it can be said to be a reasonable approximation, with some degree of general validity, that the first phase of general histories of philosophy, as described in this volume, shows the marked, even preponderant influence of philology. In the second volume, on the other hand, we shall see the philosophers regain the upper hand, albeit by means of intense theoretical discussion of the problems of writing the history of philosophy — such discussions as those in the *Einleitung* of Heumann, the *Préface*, the *Éclaircissements*, and the *Avertissement* of Deslandes, in the *Dissertatio praeliminaris* of Brucker. This is the transition from the straightforward history of philosophy to the 'philosophical' history of philosophy (to use Heumann's phrase), whatever kind of philosopher the author might happen to be — whether the new breed of Wolfian scholastic, or a mind that prefigures that of the Enlightenment *philosophe*.

Profound crises were later to traverse the evolutionary course of these general histories, questioning their very basis and so provoking discussion on the whole concept of the history of philosophy, first during the time of Kant and subsequently at the time of Hegel. So even from this perspective we can already see, as it were in advance, one possible periodization of the history of general histories of philosophy from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century.

The first and second volumes were both prepared by a group of scholars teaching in the department of the History of Philosophy at the University of Padua, who for a number of years worked in collaboration at the former Centro di studio per la storia della storiografia filosofica, under the aegis and patronage of the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR). A large part of the work was undertaken within the framework of the programmes of research carried out and presented at the Centre during the period of its activity. The group consisted of the following professors: Francesco Bottin, Mario Longo, Luciano Malusa, Giuseppe Micheli, Gregorio Piaia, Giovanni Santinello, Ilario Tolomio.

The present volume is largely the work of Luciano Malusa, Giuseppe

Micheli, and Ilario Tolomio, while certain subsections of the second section of the Introduction and of the fourth chapter (in Part Two) were written by Francesco Bottin and Giovanni Santinello (their respective contributions are indicated by their names, which appear at the foot of the page in the appropriate places).

We wish to thank all those, in Italy and elsewhere, who made suggestions and helped us in various ways. Particular thanks are due to Professor Lucien Braun, President of the University of Human Sciences in Strasbourg (Department of Philosophy), as well as to the directors of the following libraries (whose collections we consulted the most frequently): the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; the British Library, London; the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin; the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich; the Universitätsbibliothek, Leipzig; the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna; the Biblioteca Nazionale 'Vittorio Emanuele III', Rome; the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; the Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna; the Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Milan; the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice; and, in Padua, the University Library, the Library of the Museo Civico, the Biblioteca Antoniana, the Biblioteca del Seminario, and the libraries of the Benedictine monasteries of S. Giustina and Praglia.

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GIOVANNI SANTINELLO

INTRODUCTION

SECTION ONE

RENAISSANCE ANTECEDENTS TO THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF PHILOSOPHY

LUCIANO MALUSA

1. HUMANISM AND THE HISTORICIZATION OF ANCIENT THOUGHT

By the time Thomas Stanley published the first volume of his work entitled *The History of Philosophy* in London in 1655, European culture was ready to welcome a work which thus defined itself. Stanley, who was a poet, philologist, and man of letters, took his title from the Latin expression *historia philosophica*, which was already in use in learned circles among scholars and historians. He had before him a quantity of works belonging to a type of enquiry the aim of which was to investigate the particular events and historical details of philosophical activity. In the same year in which the *History of Philosophy* appeared, the historian Georg Horn, Professor at the University of Leiden, published a work of his own entitled *Historia philosophica*. This work, despite its somewhat schematic, panoramic nature, and despite a number of precipitate conclusions and interpretations, was demonstrably the fruit of a tradition of research which had been established during the course of the sixteenth century. It was not mere chance that Stanley and Horn should have published two comprehensive works on the *historia philosophica* in the same year. It would seem that the moment had arrived to move on from detailed investigations or historical sketches to the all-embracing work, the comprehensive treatment, the thorough and definitive study. These two 'histories of philosophy' were rooted in the previous century and had taken over their convictions and methods from the philological and philosophical scholarship which flourished at that time. They found solid and well-motivated working methods in the Renaissance period and in the laborious work of the rediscovery of classical antiquity, while at the same time drawing fresh inspiration from the new projects which had begun to take shape under the influence of Bacon and other *novatores*.

In the following pages we shall therefore be examining two different attitudes towards the historiography of philosophy. The first section of this introduction will present those broad philosophical trends and other theological, religious, and cultural tendencies that, through the ideas and elaborations to which they gave rise, favoured the development of a specific interest in the history of philosophy. In the second section we shall follow the emergence, between the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, of works devoted wholly or in part to the historical analysis of thought. In order to find our way through this tortuous itinerary of pioneering attempts and partial realizations, governed by convention, innovation, and renewal, we shall examine the most significant works in which the *historia philosophica* took shape. We shall therefore limit ourselves to the investigation of particular categories and tendencies — humanism, philology, speculative and religious ideas, scholastic thought, polyhistory, the philosophical sects. There are many works which lay claim to our attention as being worthy of study: monographs, outlines, systematic and encyclopaedic works, inventories, catalogues, treatises, etc. From among these we have selected only those which appeared to be most useful in providing a framework within which to examine the salient characteristics of the emergent historical-philosophical reviews, which may be said to have resulted from the (not always very careful) application of certain ideas current among the humanists, Platonists, 'concordists', revivers of scepticism, and Protestant historians.

Interest in the history of thought came about in the fifteenth century as a result of the humanist movement which was dedicated to the recovery of classical antiquity. Garin has pointed out that the movement towards classical thought on the part of the humanists was not an attempt to reinstate a world which had been lost during the course of centuries of decadence and barbarism. On the contrary, it represented an effort directed towards the historical recreation of an era which, although past, was significant for human history and of perennial interest in the world of culture and thought (cf. Garin, *L'umanesimo italiano*, pp. 14–24). The confusion of antiquity with the present was not made by the humanists of the fifteenth century, but had occurred inadvertently during the Middle Ages when there existed only a partial and often distorted knowledge of classical antiquity. The Roman Empire, for example, was understood only as the Holy Roman Empire created by Charlemagne. In the culture of the so-called Dark Ages or of the era of the Italian city-states no distinctions were made between the spirit and styles of even the most famous classical authors. As Garin observes: "There can be no doubt that the Middle Ages knew the ancients: we know today how great a part of classical thought the scholastics possessed, especially after the twelfth century. It is simply that in those days it was not considered important to know whether an idea came originally from Plato or Aristotle. What mattered was to assimilate it, to examine its truth and validity." The

humanists, however, studied the ancient world in its broadest sense, including the world of Christianity and the teachings of the Church Fathers. They considered it a past era, its voices silenced for ever, but still of interest both for its history and its doctrines, because the works and other memorials it had left behind provided shining examples of humanity, of depth of wisdom, of civil and moral commitment. Their purpose was to rediscover the works, style, and attitudes of the classical world, which they held up as examples of a way of living which was worthy of man and his destiny.

Their search for examples to serve as models (whether theoretical or moral) did not mean that they simply isolated particular sayings, ideas or doctrines, abstracting them from their context and presenting them to the man of the fifteenth century in order that he might imitate them. Rather, it entailed a thorough programme of research into the works and customs of classical culture with the purpose of ascertaining its criteria of judgement, in order then to be able to proceed with certainty to the study of its way of life and its research into the natural and moral worlds. The humanists saw their task as being to question the ancients and to elicit from them ever more detailed and satisfying answers. Moreover, the questions they asked were not the mere repetition of conventional formulae so much as the initiation of a process of dialogue. Garin continues: "The meeting with the past, and the presence of the past, does not mean the fusion of an impersonal truth in which both minds (mine and the other) are merged, as one. It is a true dialogue into which we enter, each with our own opinions, and employing those words which express our particular point of view most authentically" (Garin, *La storia nel pensiero del Rinascimento*, p. 204). Ancient authors became the object of careful, profound, and impassioned research, in order that they might reveal every possible aspect of themselves to the researcher's exhaustive enquiries. The effort was made to allow them to speak with their own voice, to live again as if in their own times and with their own problems. Only if they were authentically themselves could the ancients say anything that would be of use to men of culture and education who were involved in civil or religious life. Observing these developments, Garin remarks that

in this way history was born: that is, as philology, or as the critical awareness of itself and of others, in a world built up as a collaborative venture, and rediscovered in its every dimension, through the recognition and acknowledgement of human culture everywhere — and consciously aware, too, of this process, of the articulate stages which marked its development, and of the values it recaptured (*op. cit.*, p. 205).

Humanist culture aspired to embody both eloquence and history, in the sense that it gave a privileged position in higher learning and human education to the study of rhetoric, poetry, and literature, and also that it constantly

related these activities to memory, understood as the recovery and reappropriation of the past (Kristeller and Vasoli have given masterly accounts of this process in their works of synthesis). Conversation with the ancients was thus initiated within the dimension of memory, by contrast with the dry logical-dialectical exercises practised in William of Ockham's Aristotelianism (or, indeed, in Scholasticism in general). The antihistorical use of the works of Aristotle and his annotators was succeeded by the attempt to illustrate the human world in its entirety through the example of the classical poets and writers. The potential of rhetoric was rediscovered as a means to knowledge and as a committed means of moral guidance and orientation in the human world. The world of the 'probable', the 'credible', and the 'lifelike' (*verisimilis*), as opposed to that of rigid logical certainty, was recovered and reasserted. Political, moral, and spiritual knowledge was affirmed in human terms rather than in coldly technical ones. Historical memory was greatly valued by the humanists, who emphasized its role in providing exemplary human situations from which they could draw inspiration for their studies (Vasoli). History was no longer understood merely as the ground in which the design of Providence was worked out. Setting aside theological preoccupations, the early humanist scholars were careful to value the ancient world for its humanity, for the lives which it enabled them to recall from the past and make known to the present, for the samples of the human condition which it provided. Historians used classical sources to trace an up-to-date picture of the history of those times, while students of philology and classical languages turned directly to the ancient authors in order to rediscover their personalities and moral standpoints.

Greek and Roman thinkers were also involved in this great process of 'historicization'. The early fifteenth-century humanists were chiefly interested in Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus. They regarded their task as being to incorporate the work of these philosophers into the secular philosophical programme to which they were committed, and into the working-out of the specific problems which confronted them, in order to arrive at such general speculative solutions as they were in fact capable of formulating. In setting up a direct comparison between the human and civil demands of the culture of their day and those demands which had led the ancient thinkers to found their schools and propound particular doctrines and ethical-political models, the humanists considered that they could create a certain impetus towards giving man the position that was due to him in the spiritual and natural world. Leonardo Bruni's *Isagogicon moralis disciplinae* (1421-4) is a characteristic example of the early humanists' historical outlook. It employs the technique of confronting the ideas of the past with the demands of the present — demands which are chiefly of a moral nature, and concern man in his totality (the search for the *summum bonum*). Bruni revived the ancient doctrines in his writings not only so that useful moral injunctions could be

drawn from them, but above all because it was worthwhile in itself to know how much classical antiquity had theorized on the nature of the Good, and to what extent this theorizing had been effectively developed. There were three fundamental positions for humanity within ancient thought: the Epicurean (in which the Good consists in *voluptas*), the Aristotelian (the Good consists in *virtus*), and the Stoic (the Good consists in what is *honestum*); these mark out the complete spectrum of moral research which later philosophical thought inherited from the ancients — an inheritance which may be assimilated provided that it becomes a ‘method’ of living (*Isagogicon moralis disciplinae ad Galeottum Ricasolanum*, Eng. trans. J. Hankins, *The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1987), pp. 267–82).

Later, in his *Vita Aristotelis* (1429), Bruni states that the philosophers’ lives are of interest in the renewal of modern culture chiefly for the way in which they illustrate the outlines of a form of speculative and civil commitment which must be re-examined and relived. He finds Aristotle’s philosophy and way of living superior to that of Plato and the other ancient thinkers because Aristotle interpreted better than anyone else the Greek ideal of completeness and universality — that harmony of tendencies and inclinations to which man must hold in order to fulfil himself completely (*Vita Aristotelis*, Eng. trans. Hankins, *Humanism*, pp. 283–92). The comparison between a past reconstructed from historical-biographical sources (Augustine, Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Diogenes Laertius), and a present full of practical and political problems, was also to preoccupy Gianozzo Manetti in his *Vita Socratis*, a sure sign that the didactic intention which motivated the humanists did not confine itself merely to the delineation of an exemplary model or pattern of life (*exemplum*), but aimed to present a fully worked-out reconstruction (cf. G. Manetti, *Vita Socratis*, ed. M. Montuori, *De homine*, XLVI, 1972, pp. 85–120).

Such an outlook was bound to occasion particular interest in the *Lives of the Philosophers* of Diogenes Laertius, a work which was accepted as the most authoritative starting point for any exposition of ancient thought. After being translated into Latin by Traversari, Laertius’ book circulated widely.¹ It was read, summarized, and translated into the vernacular, supplanting *De vita et moribus philosophorum*, a clumsy and often naive imitation of Laertius’ work written by Walter Burley (1275–1344/5), which had enjoyed a relative success during the later Middle Ages.²

¹ For details of this circulation cf. Sect. 2 of the present Introduction, where the editions and translations of *De vitis philosophorum* are listed.

² On Burley’s book see: A. Uña Suarez, ‘Un pensador del siglo XIV: Walter Burley. Notas sobre su vida, obra y influjo posterior’, *Estudios sobre la Baja Edad Media* (Madrid, 1977), pp. 197–201. *De vita et moribus philosophorum* was still attracting interest in Italy halfway through the fifteenth century in certain circles on the fringes of humanist culture. There are two manuscripts in Venice (Bibl. Marciana, MSS Z. L. CCCXII and L. VI. CCLII) that reproduce the work, one in part, the other in full. They belonged to Giovanni Cristoforo da Arzignano, a customs and excise collector who, around the middle of the fifteenth century, diligently recopied these lives of the ancient philosophers for his own personal study.

The reason for the popularity of Laetius' book in the fifteenth century was that it combined biography with 'doxography': that is to say, it was a work of reconstruction which placed the philosopher's life in its historical context while at the same time outlining his doctrines and opinions (understood as his personal contribution to philosophy as a whole). The humanists were apt to consider ancient philosophy as a succession of schools or sects, the particular interest of which, considered from the theoretical point of view, rendered the overall picture rich, varied, and instructive. On the one hand, the account of the philosophers' lives revealed the civil and moral commitment and contemplative endeavours of these exceptional men, who were thereby shown to be true masters of living; on the other, the account of the sects demonstrated the organic unity of doctrines which had been originally conceived by one author, then developed and put in order by others. In using the work of Diogenes Laetius, fifteenth-century scholars sought not so much a straightforward series of doctrines and sayings (*placita*) attributable to the ancient philosophers, but rather a means of placing the philosophical schools in clear succession. Their work of reconstruction was intended to provide generations of scholars and students with clear-cut and well-characterized philosophical positions, drawn from the 'corpus' and typical of the personalities of the different members of the sect in question.

The humanists were drawn towards two different methods of presenting the philosophical sects. The first, following the example of Diogenes (who was himself following a fairly widespread tradition in ancient historiography), consisted in subdividing ancient philosophy into two main currents, namely, the Ionian school and the Italic school, paying particular attention to the geographical-historical aspect as an important factor in classifying the sects' chronology. The second, taken from both Cicero and the Church Fathers, identified four principal sects in Greek philosophy. These might variously be listed as (1) the Academy, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean; (2) Plato's Academy, the 'second' or 'middle' Academy as continued under Aristotle, the Stoic, and the Epicurean; or else (3) Socrates, Plato's Academy, Carneades' Academy, Stoicism.

One important source which documents these different ways of presenting the ancient Greek philosophical sects is the *Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis et eorum inter se differentia*, dedicated to Marsilio Ficino and

He was mentioned by Ludwig Stein, in the article 'Handschriftenfunde zur Philosophie der Renaissance; I: Die erste "Geschichte der antiken Philosophie" in der Neuzeit', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 1 (1888), pp. 552-3, as the author of one of the 'first works on the history of ancient philosophy in modern times', showing that Stein did not recognize in the *De vita et moribus philosophorum*, as contained in the two manuscripts, a straightforward transcription, pure and simple, of Burley's book. Cf. T. Sartore, 'Gian Cristoforo d'Arzignano, presunto autore vicentino, ed alcuni manoscritti del *De vita et moribus philosophorum*', *Aevum*, xxxiii (1959), pp. 505-15. Stein's error was repeated by later critics. Sartore's discovery was kindly pointed out to me by my friend and colleague Ilario Tolomio.

attributed to the Florentine historian Bartolomeo Scala (1428–1497).³ This is the first fifteenth-century plan of ancient philosophy which possesses a certain organic unity. Moving on from the erudite biographical-doxographical models, it goes on to present a hypothesis of possible pictures of the ancient philosophical schools, as seen in an essentially conceptual succession. The point of departure is clearly Bruni's *Isagogicon* and his "conciliatio quadam philosophorum" (*Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, in L. Stein, *Handschriftenfunde zur Philosophie der Renaissance*, p. 540). The author refers primarily to Varro (quoting from St Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, xix, 1), in order to present one possible classification and listing of the philosophical sects established on the basis of their view of the supreme good, according to a method which follows the direction indicated by the four things which all men naturally seek (that is to say: satisfaction of the senses (*voluptas*); repose (*otium*); satisfaction and repose combined, giving pleasure or delight; the primordial good things of nature) and finally arrives, through all the possible combinations, at a total number of 288 sects. In discussing Varro's classification, he maintains that the *differentiae* between the sects should be researched not mechanically, but by paying attention to the real differences in the philosophers' opinions concerning man's supreme good (*de summo hominis bono*). In antiquity, the work of the "most noble thinkers" had resulted in four fundamental positions: the Platonic-Peripatetic (which descended from the teaching of Socrates), the second Academy, the Stoic, and the Epicurean. We should not attempt to understand the sects on the basis of random opinions taken from one thinker or another, but through an investigation of the real consistency of the doctrine of the whole school. For this reason the *Epistola* does not number among the "true sects" those philosophers whose purpose is merely to decipher and elucidate the "obscurity of nature", nor those whose ideas are simply hypothetical, rather than real. There remain only the schools, which put forward an authentic message founded on a complete moral and physical doctrine (*Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, p. 544).

In consequence, the *Epistola* presents ancient sects which are truly worthy of the name, according to a criterion which is halfway between the historical and the theoretical. The figure of Socrates, for example, is seen as the inspiration for antiquity's most important sect, the Platonic-Peripatetic. To the author of the *Epistola* this serves to indicate that authentic speculation — that which is in search of the supreme good — began when a series of disparate inquiries concerning nature was succeeded by a complete and organic system of knowledge embracing man, nature, and God. The greater part of ancient philosophy was descended from Socrates: of the four 'most

³ Cf. P. O. Kristeller, s.v. 'Buoninsegni', in *DBI*, xv, pp. 255–6; L. Stein (*Handschriftenfunde zur Philosophie der Renaissance*, pp. 538–9) mistakenly attributed it to Giovanni Battista Buoninsegni (Buonosegnius), and was followed in this by Braun, pp. 54–5.

noble' sects, at least three (the original Academy, the second Academy, and the Stoa) owed their preoccupation with the idea of virtue as the supreme good to him. The line represented by Plato, Aristotle, Carneades and Arcesilaus, Chrysippus, and subsequently Philo and Plotinus, gave birth to a tradition of speculation which, at a distance of many centuries, appears clearly the most mature and rich in ideas (*Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, p. 547). The Epicurean sect, for whom pleasure (*voluptas*) was the supreme good, and which furthermore withdrew from society, is excluded from the line descending from Socrates. The four major sects are examined and discussed in the pursuit of greater historical clarity — which is not, however, an end in itself, but reflects the attempt to chart the overall course of ancient philosophy, in order to comprehend its predominant trends.

To the author of the *Epistola*, Platonism, which seems to be by far the most noble of the philosophies, merits being studied and followed. He writes: "I cannot but admire in all things the discoveries of the ancient philosophers, and above all of those who, taking Plato, whom Labeo called a demigod, for their master, have left us so many and such recondite writings (*tanta tamque abscondita*) on matters divine and human" (*Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, p. 550). By comparison with the dominant 'system', that is Socratic-Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy, the Academic sect appears somewhat wayward because of its foolishness in aspiring to find a direction of its own in 'probabilism'. The Stoic sect appears even more obviously wayward because of its preoccupation with ideas of knowledge (which was held to consist in perceptible contact through the senses) and virtue. The Epicurean sect appears in all respects to be in antithesis to the dominant philosophical position. The historical organization of ancient thought is therefore governed by the desire to present the facts drawn from the sources within a framework which shows the origins of the sects in a clear line of development from the Socratic-Platonic perspective. The work of historicization takes as its model the work of Diogenes Laertius, while the need for systematization, taking Varro's classification as a starting point, leads to a rather different arrangement of the sects, identifying the occasion of their birth with the birth in Socrates of the 'humanistic' impulse. The historical perspective adopted in the *Epistola* may be characterized by reference to the procedure adopted in its central part, where the four sects' doctrines are analysed using each of three basic arguments: anthropology and ethics (nature of the soul, purpose of life), cosmology (debates concerning nature), logic (true and false judgements) (*Epistola de nobilioribus philosophorum sectis*, pp. 547-50).

The historiography of philosophy, as it originated in humanist circles, might be said to resemble a philosophical compendium or survey compiled for use in teaching, but which seeks also to establish the historical dimension

of the philosophical schools. A similar commitment is also to be found in an outline of the history of ancient thought sketched by Giovanni Antonio Flaminio (Flaminius: 1464–1536), the father of Marcantonio Flaminio, in a short treatise entitled *De origine philosophiae ac philosophorum sectis opusculum*, published in Bologna in 1524 together with the *Dialogus de educatione ac institutione liberorum*, and dedicated to Gaspare Fantuzzi (a nobleman of Bologna). The author is a typical representative of the humanist school: a professor of the *studia humanitatis*, as well as a poet and historian, he was neither a philologist nor a philosopher, but a student of philosophical problems and a lover of antiquity interested in reconstructing the lines of development of ancient thought. For Flaminio, however, pedagogical, moral, and didactic imperatives predominate over historical interest. This is a sketch which uses ancient sources to trace the origins and development of the various sects and to assign to each sect its particular group of thinkers, together with the moral maxims which had made them famous.

Flaminio seeks to create order within the multiplicity of philosophies and to demonstrate that they had all made valid contributions, above all in moral philosophy. He examines the most remote of the ancient philosophies (Persian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Indian, Egyptian, and Gallic) and those early Greek sects which stand at the head of the two main traditions: the Ionic and Italic. The care with which Flaminio relates the order of succession of the different thinkers shows that he has a didactic purpose in emphasizing the overall position of each philosopher within his sect, but that he is not really interested in defining philosophical problems within their historical context. For him, the Ionic line began with Thales and passed through Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, Socrates, Plato, and the Academic, Stoic, and Peripatetic schools to Theophrastus (*De origine philosophiae*, fols. 6^v–16^r). The Italic line began with Pythagoras and continued through Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus (*De origine philosophiae*, fols. 16^v–18^v). The different philosophers followed one another, within the two traditions, according to an order of strict ‘discipleship’. Flaminio regards the disciples as the ideal ‘sons’ of their teachers. He makes no attempt to connect speculative positions. Apart from having his relationship to the school delineated, the position of each philosopher is qualified only on the basis of the moral opinions he has expressed. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus are thus characterized almost exclusively by reference to their moral personalities.

The procedures and general outlook of the Italian humanists can be found, too, in certain historical sketches written by early sixteenth-century European humanists. A short history of philosophy which employs the technique of biographical portraits typical of Burley, is the *Spicilegium XXXV illustrium philosophorum auctoritates utilesque sententias continens* by Hermann von dem Busch (Buschius: 1468–1534), a German humanist,

disciple of Alexander Hegius at Deventer, and teacher of ancient literature in Italy and Germany (Wittenberg, Leipzig, Cologne, Magdeburg). It was published in 1507 (no place of publication was given, but Panzer gives it as Deventer: G. W. Panzer, *Annales typographici* (Nuremberg, 1799), Vol. VI, p. 486), together with epigrams by the same author and a collection of letters of which he had been the recipient. In the dedication to Johannes Sunnenberg, Chancellor of the University of Rostock, von dem Busch declares that he wishes to add his own modest contribution to the history of philosophy, following the direction indicated by Diogenes Laertius, by gathering the "ears of corn" which have been dropped by the reapers (that is to say, the authors of much larger works) and by rearranging the philosophers' portraits for the benefit of younger minds (*Spicilegium*, 'Dedicatio', pp. [1-2]). This is followed by a compilation of the various *dicta sapienter* and *responsa* of the philosophers, arranged in two books (the first devoted to the Ionic school, the second to the Italic). This is the first example of a proper historical-philosophical treatment of such material to appear in a humanist context outside Italy. It was evidently appreciated in German circles, as is shown by the fact that a new edition was published in Vienna in 1513 under the title *Spicilegium philosophorum pene omnium, quotquot per Graeciam Italiamque clari habiti sunt*, together with a list of the philosophers studied. The *Declamatio de vero philosopho et philosophiae origine ac partitione*, by Johannes Reusch (Reuschius: d. 1543), a physician and humanist, with connections to Reuchlin and the more militant German tendencies within the humanist movement), was published in Leipzig in 1518. It appears to have greater awareness and a surer sense of orientation at both a critical and theoretical level. It is an *apologia* for the 'humanistic' mission of the philosopher, and attempts to link the history of art and literature to the history of learning and rational intellectual research. The historical purpose is in this case subordinated to the rhetorical aim of convincing the educated man of the usefulness of philosophizing, when he has once liberated himself from the preoccupations of the school and from vain subtleties, and started to cast his gaze towards the study of true humanity.

In the rather different cultural ambience of Spain and the Low Countries, but still within the same sphere of humanist-reformist inspiration, the scholar Juan Luis Vives published his *De initiis, sectis et laudibus philosophiae* (Louvain, 1518). This is a pedagogical work, intended for the philosophical and literary education of the young. It presents a reconstruction of the main lines of development of ancient barbarian and Greek philosophy, and attempts to trace, without pedantry, the overall picture of human understanding and wisdom from the Jews to the Greeks. Philosophy, as the true knowledge of things human and divine, cannot be the monopoly of any one nation.

Indeed, according to Vives, the Sophistic tendency in Greek culture had

obscured the clarity of wisdom and insight shared by Moses, the Egyptians, the Druids, and the Seven Wise Men. (*De initiis, sectis et laudibus philosophiae*, in J. L. Vives, *Opera* (Basle, 1555), Vol. II, p. 4). Socrates had made it possible for philosophy to take a renewed, authentic interest in man, and his methods and teaching influenced all subsequent forms of Greek philosophy. The three Academies (Plato, Arcesilaus, Carneades), Stoicism, the minor sects — and even Epicureanism, with its concept of *voluptas* — were all descended from him (*De initiis*, pp. 10–11). Even the conventional division of Greek philosophy into Ionic and Italic schools is crossed by another line of demarcation which focuses attention, precisely, on the figure of Socrates. For, in the establishment of philosophy as a ‘discipline’, it was he who had understood that all the arts must take as their point of reference an art whose object of study is man himself (*De initiis*, p. 14).

Vives, in setting himself the task of tracing the outline of philosophy, viewed its birth and development as a summary or compendium embracing “all the arts”, and for this reason he tended to favour its less technical, more human aspects. Aristotle’s philosophy, for example, he thought to be clear and limpid when considered from the standpoint of wisdom or understanding, but obscure when looked at as a strictly logical organism supposedly capable of providing a series of precepts and rules. It was Aristotle’s interpreters who had tried to make his philosophy seem more obscure and complicated than it really was, through a combination of *torpor* and *neglegentia*. At this point Vives’ programme becomes clear. He invites us to review the whole of human philosophy, rejecting complicated interpretations and extracting from it a broadly-based idea of philosophy as “wisdom” and the “art of arts” (*De initiis*, pp. 12–13). It was in the *De initiis, sectis et laudibus philosophiae* that the humanist tradition realized most completely its historiographical aims. The historical interest in ancient philosophy manifested and proclaimed in the civic programme of Italian humanism becomes here the commitment to make of the intellectual investigation the means of recovering the true path of wisdom and of recreating an idea of philosophy which, far from being arid and merely technical, in fact represents the synthesis of all the arts. Here ‘philosophy’ and ‘understanding’ are seen to coincide, and the history of thought becomes the vehicle by which ancient wisdom prepares the way for Socrates and Plato.

But at this point it becomes clear that the idea of such a function for philosophy has been deduced, at least in part, from the efforts made by Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, through the activity of the so-called Platonic Academy of Florence, to give a unified philosophical vision to the different tendencies of human thought.

2. 'PRISCA THEOLOGIA' AND 'PERENNIS PHILOSOPHIA'

The contribution of Italian humanism to philosophical historiography — that is, the 'historicization' of earlier periods of philosophical activity — was assimilated into many philosophical currents and cultural trends between the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth. The Florentine Platonists, however, brought their own particular set of preoccupations to add to the anxiety of the critical-historicist movement. Indeed, they consciously pursued historiographical awareness a great deal further than anyone else. Already in the first half of the fifteenth century, the writings of Nicholas of Cusa (Cusanus: 1401–1464) had shown a tendency to envisage the history of ancient philosophy in terms of a synthesis between detailed philological investigation and general speculative interpretation. His approach was essentially that of a Neoplatonist, and he had used his knowledge of Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum* in order to propose a unified view of the history of thought. In his *De venatione sapientiae* (1463) he put forward the interesting concept of a "hunt for wisdom" which had been carried on at different times and places. A number of ancient thinkers were examined in order to show the unified orientation of their research, directed as it was towards a constantly renewed, though always inadequate, knowledge of God and the world — cf. Cusanus, *De venatione sapientiae*, Eng. trans. by Fr. G. Heron, introd. D. J. B. Hawkins (London, 1954). Cusanus theorized in his own way, within the terms of the *via negativa*. This negative method had begun from the concept of *docta ignorantia*, and went on to specify in various ways the essential unity of human endeavour in its different attempts to arrive at a representation of the truth, while at the same time emphasizing the variety of those attempts. In matters of theology and religion, for example, he theorized about the possibility of peace between different religious faiths (*De pace fidei*, 1453), stressing also the need for a similar approach to different traditions of philosophical knowledge and understanding. However, his vast work did not stir up much interest in the study of the history of ancient thought, nor in the revival of Platonic authors and the very ancient philosophical traditions.

Cusanus' knowledge of classical thought was derived from Diogenes Laertius and the Neoplatonic philosophers (among whom he was familiar with Proclus and pseudo-Dionysius). In the second half of the fifteenth century in Florence there was a more pronounced movement towards the recovery of ancient thought in its entirety, which yielded a more precise knowledge of the roles of the different authors, of the various currents and trends. In the case of Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola this resulted above all in a marked tendency towards speculative studies, the effect of which was to promote a picture of the history of philosophy of particular

richness and definition. For them the fact of the continuity of the philosophical tradition through time, as of the essential unity of speculative thought, was above all a historical fact, to be revealed by means of a comparative historiographical method. The task of historicization was here transformed into certainty of belief concerning the unified development of human thought, proceeding from an ancient and thoroughly dependable philosophical-theological wisdom (the *prisca theologia*), the tradition of which had survived until the era of the Christian revelation (through Christ and the Church Fathers), and was later recovered after the rebirth of the philosophy of the 'divine' Plato.

In the writings of Marsilio Ficino there is clear evidence of a change from the pursuit of erudition and learning, which resulted in works produced according to the patterns typical of Florentine humanism, to a markedly 'programmatic' position concerning the need to trace a unified, organic history of the emergence and diffusion of philosophical-theological truths among the peoples of antiquity. In the epistle *De quattuor sectis philosophorum*, to Clemente Fortini, probably written between 1457 and 1458 (at about the same time, therefore, as the *Epistola* attributed to Bartolomeo Scala), there is a decided humanist influence. The four sects (for Ficino these are the Platonic, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean) are presented at the end of a panoramic survey of the contributions made by the most eminent of the ancient philosophies in regard to the problems of God, the world, the soul, and the sovereign good (*De quattuor sectis philosophorum*, in *Supplementum ficinianum*: Marsilio Ficino, *Opuscula inedita et dispersa*, ed. P. O. Kristeller, Vol. II (Florence, 1937), pp. 7-10). Thus for example in the youthful treatise *De voluptate*, dedicated to Antonio Canigiani (cf. Ficino, *Opera*, II (Basle, 1576, facsimile edn, Turin, 1962), pp. 986-1012), the task of reviewing the positions taken by ancient philosophers regarding *voluptas* is justified by the necessity of gathering together every historical element which might be useful in setting out a problem which cannot be solved by reason alone:

I have compiled for you these arguments on pleasure, put forward by various philosophers; but I had rather you were swayed, in choosing which amongst these views to adopt, by the authority and reasons of those who argue here than by my own judgement; for me it shall suffice to have reported the opinions of virtually all the philosophers in order to exercise my memory (*De voluptate*, p. 1012).

The *Tractatus de Deo et anima* (1457-8: written in Italian) introduces a new element, that of guiding the broad historical review towards a final end: namely, that of coordinating the different positions taken by ancient philosophers with regard to the Divinity and the soul.

Hermes Trismegistus' 'mercurial' vision of the divinity as an infinite sphere, intellectual and incorporeal, is considered to be identical to Plato's later idea of God as "power" (*potenza*), "efficient cause", "exemplary wisdom"

(*sapientia exemplo*), and as "that Goodness (*bonità*) [which is] the end of all created things" (*Tractatus de Deo et anima vulgaris*, in *Supplementum ficinianum*, Vol. II, p. 141). The agreement between Trismegistus and Plato is not an accidental one: Ficino provides several lists of ancient and medieval philosophers who, apart from differences in terminology, find themselves in agreement on doctrinal principles concerning God and the soul. Following the list of philosophers who agree about the soul's immortality, Ficino presents a list of philosophers who believe the opposite, the so-called "mortalists" (*mortalistiche*), noting how contradictory and often unclear their positions are: only Dicearchus denies the existence of the soul, while the others concentrate more on the problem of the soul's relationship with the body and try to explain how it can be the origin of life (*Tractatus de Deo*, pp. 141-7).

In his letters to Janus Pannonius (1484) and Martinus Uranius (1489) Ficino explains his unified vision of a coherent pattern in the evolution of human thought in connection with a programme of research and philosophical liberation. In the letter to Uranius he affirms that there is a twofold path to happiness: these are the "philosophical" and the "priestly"; one is "more accessible" (*apertior*), the other "more direct" (*brevior*). Only Plato had known how to unite them both by joining together the influences of Socrates and Moses. "With God pointing and leading the way you will attain the same thing [sc. happiness], especially since our Plato follows, together with Pythagoras' and Socrates' reasons, the law of Moses, and foreshadows that of Christ" (*Marsilius Ficinus florentinus Martino Uranio Praenyngero*, in Ficino, *Opera*, Vol. I, p. 899). Ficino adds a long list of thinkers who have followed in the footsteps of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, extending from antiquity through the Middle Ages to the Renaissance: Dionysius the Areopagite, St Augustine, Iamblichus, Proclus, Boethius, Apuleius, Chalcidius, Macrobius, Avicenna, Al-Farabi, Henry of Ghent, Avicenna, Johannes Duns Scotus, Cardinal Bessarion, and Nicholas of Cusa (*Marsilius Ficinus florentinus Martino Uranio*, p. 899).

This list of thinkers belonging to the line of conciliation between the 'priestly' way and the 'philosophical' way to truth was coherently set out in the letter to Pannonius (it was repeated word for word in the letter to Lorenzo the Magnificent which introduced the Latin version of the *Enneads* of Plotinus: Ficino, *Opera*, Vol. II, p. 1537). There is, wrote Ficino, a very ancient theology which influenced Plato: it began with Zoroaster and Hermes Trismegistus, was first established in Greece in very ancient times by Orpheus and Aglaophemus, grew up with Pythagoras in the Italic school, and reached maturity with Plato in Athens. This speculative argument from very ancient origins is not legend (*fabula*) but authentic wisdom manifested in 'the numbers and figures of mathematics': Plotinus examined the numerical symbolism explained with superb authority by Pythagoras and Plato and

was able, with divine art (*divinitus*), to penetrate into all the ancient secrets (*arcana veterum*). In this way the unity of the tradition of speculative thought acquired a new conscious awareness of itself. However, in studying it one should not refer only to the phase represented by the work of Plotinus: it is necessary to return, calmly and without prejudice, to its remote origins. According to Ficino it was essential to salvage the fragments of ancient 'theologies' in order to show that they did not come about merely through the operation of fate — that is, constituting an arbitrary succession of theological positions — but were in fact the work of Providence. In one of his letters Janus Pannonius expressed doubt about the divine nature of these very ancient philosophies (cf. *Joannes Pannonius Marsilio Ficino*, in Ficino, *Opera*, Vol. I, p. 871): Ficino responded by extolling both the historical and religious character of his work on ancient philosophies. He affirmed decisively that it was not the fruit of mere "curiosity" but a true "renewal of the ancient authors" (*renovatio antiquorum*), based on a religious and speculative commitment towards the creation of a new way of looking at the relationships between philosophies. The return to the *prisca theologia* was intended to correct the sterile disagreements within the philosophical schools, and especially to contrast the religious-philosophical unity of the Platonic tradition with the profound dissensions which had caused the Aristotelians to divide themselves into Alexandrists and Averroists (*Marsilius Ficinus Joanni Pannonio*, in Ficino, *Opera*, Vol. I, pp. 871-2).

Recourse to historical enquiry was, for Ficino, the only way to avoid dogmatic or naturalistic philosophy: the reconstruction of the ancient theology (or 'theology emerging into the light': *theologia in lucem prodiens*) would provide the material to link philosophy and faith indissolubly. He himself took on the task of translating many of the writings which referred to ancient traditions (both of the letters we have quoted, to Pannonius and Uranius, concluded with a proud presentation of his work), but he was also planning the best way to conduct a more wide-ranging historical review which would make use of his translated and edited versions of the texts. The preoccupation with setting out and describing an itinerary to be traversed with the use of historical instruments is evident, for example, in the letter to Braccio Marcello (*Marsilius Ficinus Braccio Marcello*, in Ficino, *Opera*, Vol. I, pp. 866-7) and in the *Theologia platonica* (Bk. xvii, ch. I, ed. R. Marcel (Paris, 1970), Vol. III, pp. 148-9), and is also closely connected with the material treated in his youthful works, where his main aim was to list the various sects of the Greek philosophers. The *Theologia platonica* also traces the history of the Platonic Academy in six phases, presenting it almost as the complement to the long patterns of derivation and development. Referring to the course of the 'ancient theology' as it had passed into the school of Plato, Ficino wrote:

But since they all concealed the sacred mysteries of things divine

behind poetical screens (*poeticis umbraculis*), lest they should be shared with the uninitiated (*ne prophanis communia fierent*), it came about that their successors interpreted theology in different ways. Hence the crowd of Platonic expositors divided itself into six Academies, of which three were Athenian, the others foreign: of the Athenian, the Old Academy flourished under Xenocrates, the Middle under Arcesilaus, the New under Carneades; of the foreign, the Egyptian under Ammonius, the Roman under Plotinus, the Lycian under Proclus. However, although there were six schools of Platonists, the three in Athens, together with the Egyptian, took everything Plato had written on the circuit of the souls otherwise than in the literal sense (*quam verba accipiebant*); the two after them paid more attention to the words' face value (*ipsam verborum faciem curiosius observarunt*) (*Theologia platonica*, ed. R. Marcel, Vol. III, p. 148).

In the history of ancient philosophy, the moment of greatest fidelity to Plato's theology occurred when his heritage was being developed outside Greece (in Rome by Plotinus and in Lycia by Proclus): Ficino shows the sense and direction of the development of ancient philosophy as proceeding from an ever-growing awareness of the value and significance of the wisdom of the ancient theologians, whose message cannot be set apart from the study of Platonic philosophy without detaching the latter from its foundations in ancient wisdom, and thereby seeing in it the development of themes and concepts of a purely logical, ethical, or natural character.

In his writings Ficino put forward a number of important historical theories, having collected together for this purpose a great many philosophical propositions originally formulated in the Patristic-Alexandrian era, and so gave them currency once more among European scholars and intellectual circles. This had important consequences for philosophical historiography. Firstly, it increased the number of historical 'sources' that could be referred to in the work of reconstructing ancient thought (a process already begun by the Italian humanists), thereby showing that the history of thought could be retraced across a wide area, by drawing on a vast quantity of literature. Secondly, it proposed a chronological and geographical broadening of the scope of such a history, showing how it was possible to write the history of philosophy from the very beginnings of humanity down to the Renaissance, including every nation, and considering as well the Patristic and Medieval periods (that is, the thought that had developed after Christ). Thirdly, and most importantly, it caused a type of advance in human thinking that depended less on the activity of schools or scholastic organizations than on a series of speculative-religious relationships.

Ficino's immediate followers in the sixteenth century did not fully understand this project of a unified account of the history of philosophy, being

more attracted, as we shall see, by Pico della Mirandola's endeavours to establish an agreement between Plato's thought and that of Aristotle. However, there were those who were aware of the historical possibilities revealed in the schemes sketched out by Ficino. These included Agostino Steuco (Steucus) of Gubbio (Eugubinus), bishop, canon of the church of St John Lateran, and prefect at the Vatican library (1497-1548), a figure who has been unjustly, and mistakenly, undervalued by the scholars of a period that was crucial to the history of the Church and Christianity, marking as it did the transition from the Catholic Reform to the Counter Reformation. He was a theologian, thinker, and historian of notable powers of intellectual synthesis, open and receptive to any and every voice from the past or present that could help to found a broad philosophical-theological tradition.

Steuco's monumental *De perenni philosophia* sets out to examine and demonstrate Ficino's opinions, both historically and theologically. It was published in Lyons in 1540 and reprinted several times during the course of the sixteenth century. It is a work in ten volumes which reconstructs ancient thought across a wide range (barbarian and Greek, Pagan and Christian), seeing it as the result of a many-sided development from a single source: namely, the 'natural revelation' of God to humanity. Ficino and Pico are not often mentioned by name in the *De perenni philosophia*, but their theories are everywhere present and influential. Steuco's exposition follows a systematic order: he examines the theology of Mind (Bk. I), of the Trinity (Bk. II), and of the Divinity as a unity (Bk. III), the monotheistic vision of Plato and Aristotle (Bks. IV and V) and of ancient post-Aristotelian philosophy (Platonic, Stoic, Neoplatonic: Bk. VI), teachings on the creation of the world (Bk. VII), on angels and demons (Bk. VIII), on the creation of man, on the immortality of the soul (Bk. IX), and the concept of religion (Bk. X). Within these divisions (that is, within each of the ten books), the enquiry is conducted historically in so far as it examines the process of development that the fundamental theological and philosophical positions have undergone over the course of time and among various nations.

The *perennis philosophia* is a collection of doctrines that arose and prospered through the original act of divine intervention, occurring within the hearts of men or through direct communication to various individuals. Time may have silenced many of the voices and their testimony, but it could not efface the deeper impressions of that revelation's profoundest traces. In describing the intention behind his research on the *perennis philosophia*, Steuco writes:

But many remnants (*reliquiae*) were left, and we have seen tossed on the waves many shipwrecks from all those many great riches, which impelled us to gather them together as best we could; though another fact that leaves the Romans worse off than the Greeks is that they could not match everything they had left, so that those who are

later in time are also inferior in wisdom. The present work will have a twofold principle (*duplex ratio*), that since it has been shown that there must always have been one wisdom, whether handed down by succession or derived by conjectures and assessments (*coniecturis et iudiciis*), to recall each of them and compare it with the true; it therefore has the title *Conformations; or, On the Perennial Philosophy*. For since there is one heavenly religion, consisting in especial piety and learning, whoever will may understand that it has been the same ever since the human race began — either nature pointed it out, or revelation came to the rescue — formerly somewhat obscure and confined to a few, afterwards shining forth in all radiance, and blazing in the whole world. Seeing these traces, these remnants of wisdom, I believed they had been as it were the rays of a light greater in the early ages, and later very great; and thus that all things faced towards one truth (Agostino Steuco, *De perenni philosophia*, (Lyons, 1540), Bk. 1, pp. 5-6).

The spread of wisdom is thus seen to be an inexorable event, a fact which confirms the strength of the revelation provoking it. The historical study of the phases and successive achievements of human thought is for Steuco the most telling apologetic argument for the evidence of divine action, and the chief demonstration of the ultimate unity of knowledge in questions of supreme or ultimate things.

Steuco broadens the channels of derivation for the diffusion of wisdom as traced by Ficino. Above all he introduces the necessity of explaining this course historically through a general comparison of the doctrines left by ancient thinkers and the philosophy of the Church Fathers. 'Wisdom' and 'philosophy' are synonymous for him in the sense that human enquiry, originating from a divine 'voice' but then frequently abandoned to its own devices and proceeding along paths of varying certainty, achieves certitude in its doctrines through the revelation of Christ, and can then properly be called 'wisdom'. 'Philosophy' had known three phases:

The first was that Whole which from the beginning of the world spread among many nations, as if from hand to hand and report following on report (*quasi per manus, et famam succedente fama*); had it not afterwards suffered violence, it would have been a great light for human affairs. The second arose from philosophers investigating the natures and causes of things; it was far removed from the first, since human judgements often stumble and do not find the truth they seek. Finally, the third philosophy dawned, illuminating all men with its clarity, dispelling the darkness of the first, not confining itself to any one place, but filling all things with its rays.

Between these phases appear a great quantity of doctrines and opinions, attributable to many thinkers, which cannot be ignored since they make,

either on their own account or in support of others, a decisive contribution to the light of wisdom.

Therefore since, as we have said, it is probable that there was a handing-down of wisdom from the creation of the world, beginning with God, who revealed to the first man his greatness, divinity, and sublime mysteries, and the first man learnt that in God there was a son and a father; from this it clearly came about that virtually all peoples have, stored in their writings, some records (*aliqua monumenta*) of the Father and the Son and the Spirit, of good and bad angels, of their creation, and of that of the world. These must be cleansed of their errors and restored to their rightful place; furthermore, many things must be demonstrated that men found out, guided by reason, concordant with the truth. (*De perenni philosophia*, Bk. 1, p. 6).

The *De perenni philosophia* represents in masterly fashion the idea of a succession of thought which sees philosophical endeavour being born from a common revelation and extending towards a unified wisdom. The breadth of the references to the ancient wisdom demonstrates the contribution of each thinker and each tradition towards the opening up of a series of theological and philosophical visions in which agreement occurs on fundamental truths such as the Trinity, Creation, and Providence, the immortality of the soul, freedom, reward and punishment, angels and demons, the end of the world. As a survey of doctrines and wisdoms, the work was highly esteemed during the following century and held to be an indispensable introduction to every *historia philosophica*. For instance, the theory of unified development was the basis of the clearly formulated vision of the history of thought held by the Cambridge Neoplatonists, who placed the ancient wisdoms in very close relationship both to classical thought and to the flowering of Christian thought.

In moving towards the recovery of the philosophies and wisdoms of the whole of the ancient world, the only interpretative tools to which Steuco had recourse were those of historical, doctrinal, and philological comparison. He drew back from the cabbalistic and magical-symbolic methods. For him, the unity of human knowledge sprang solely from the comparison of the various doctrines formulated in respect of the problems under consideration. In confronting the theme of the creation and immortality of the soul in ancient thought, for example, he dwelt firstly on the doctrines which were most clear and explicit in their affirmation of its immortality (Pythagoras, Plato), then on those that were less explicit in affirming immortality (Aristotle), and finally on those which were opposed in various ways to the concept of immortality (because they affirmed either the eternity or the mortality of the soul). The guiding thread was the assertion that in the most ancient times there had been a basic agreement between the various philosophies,

and that this demonstrated the fact of the intervention of divine revelation (*De perenni philosophia*, Bk. IX, pp. 490–91). The unity of such doctrines over a wide range of historical experience was the fundamental lesson to be drawn from the *De perenni philosophia*: supported as it was by a serious scholarly commitment, it became an important stimulus towards the historical organization of the material.

Among Platonic thinkers the only one consciously to take up this challenge was Francesco Patrizi. Both the *Discussionum peripateticarum tomi IV, quibus aristotelicae philosophiae universa historia atque dogmata cum veterum placitis collata, eleganter et erudite declarantur*, 4 vols. (Basle, 1581; editio princeps, Vol. 1 only, Venice, 1571) and the *Nova de universis philosophia* (Venice, 1593; this edn is the same as that publ. Ferrara, 1591) represent an interesting contribution to philosophical historiography, albeit within an overall scheme which presents a systematic arrangement, from a theoretical angle, of Platonic thought (as was recognized, for example, by Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 8, § 3, pp. 45–6, and Bk. 1, ch. 1, § 12, pp. 7–8).

In the *Discussiones peripateticae* the anti-Aristotelian polemic is richly supported by a wide range of historiographical material which takes into account Renaissance rediscoveries, the historical writings of the humanists, and philological criticism. The *Discussiones* were initially conceived in 1571 as a scholarly and pedagogical introduction to the life of Aristotle. Patrizi understood, however, that a complete and ‘objective’ presentation of even the biography alone implied the use of a rigorous historical method. This necessitated a full review not only of the sources relating to the life, but also of the sources of the works and commentaries on the works, including the followers of Aristotle and the whole Peripatetic school. Patrizi wrote to his pupil Zaccaria Mocenigo:

For I have also compiled the whole of Aristotle’s life out of the most trustworthy authors; collected all his books; pointed out the controversies that arose; freed from controversy those of them that I could; gathered together the fragments of the lost books; discussed the hard question of the exoteric works and others of that kind; restored a number of Aristotle’s titles; listed all the places where Aristotle mentions his books, both extant and non-extant; distinguished the books’ genres and arranged them by rank among themselves; assigned the books to their genres and established their sequence; composed so far as I could the history of the ancient Peripatetics; exhibited their principles in interpreting Aristotle and methods of philosophizing; stated which manner of philosophizing Aristotle thought the best and which was the best method for discerning Aristotle’s tenets; and in all this kept to the principle of saying nothing without the evidence of Aristotle himself, his interpreters,

and other highly approved writers (Francesco Patrizi, *Discussionum peripateticarum tomi primi, libri XIII. In quorum lectione, innumera sane invenient studiosi, non solum in aristotelica philosophia, tironibus; sed etiam, et in ea, et in reliqua literatura veteranis, mirabiliter tum utilia, tum rerum veteri novitate iucundissima* (Venice, 1571), fol. 2^v).

He moved on from this plan to a much more ambitious one in later years. Following in the footsteps of Steuco, he compared Platonic thought, Aristotelian thought, and the thought of all the other ancient philosophers. In Vol. II (comprising 8 books) he developed the theme of the 'agreement' (*concordia*) between these philosophers; then in Vol. III (7 books) he spoke of the 'discord' among them by discussing those doctrines on which they disagreed; and finally in Vol. IV (10 books) he returned to scrutinize Aristotle's doctrines in order to censure them. Patrizi's was a notable historical achievement that contributed greatly towards the consolidation of the idea of a unified history of philosophy, despite the evidence of its development and disagreements. The history of ancient thought before Plato and Aristotle was treated (as Muccillo has shown) according to strict procedures, aiming thereby at a complete review of pre-Platonic thought.

In the *Nova de universis philosophia* the most remote part of the ancient tradition is presented and discussed in what are supposedly 'historical' terms. This concerns particularly the scholarly work of the recovery and editing of the *Oraculi chaldaici*, the Hermetic texts, and the so-called *Theologia Aristotelis* — that Neoplatonic writing which Patrizi calls "the mystical philosophy of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, handed down orally by Plato and then received and written down by Aristotle, a vast treasure-house of divine wisdom". Patrizi wrote long prefaces to each of the three editions (i.e. of the Chaldean Oracles, the Hermetic corpus, and the Theology: they are to be found in the appendix to the *Nova de universis philosophia*) in which he made constant reference to the theory of the continuity of the *prisca theologia* from the most ancient texts down to Plato and the Platonists. Even the dedicatory letter of the *Nova philosophia*, addressed to Pope Gregory XIV, is most explicit on the subject. It claims that those texts which provide evidence concerning the ancient wisdom are to be preferred by the Christian Church to the works of Aristotle: "The little treatise of Hermes on piety and philosophy contains more philosophy than Aristotle's philosophy entire". Thus, for example, the *Pimander* is said to be close to the Mosaic account of the creation of the world, and the mysticism of the Egyptians is true theology. All this is clearly reflected in Plato and also in Plotinus and Proclus, with their elements of theology. Ancient and Platonic theology, affirms Patrizi, later had a decisive influence on all the early Christian theologians ('theologi veteres': *Nova de universis philosophia* (Venice, 1593 [= Ferrara, 1591; only the title page was changed between the two edns]), 'Sanctissimo D.N. Gregorio XIV Pont. Max.', fol. 2^r). These claims were reaffirmed, as

part of a vast project whose purpose was both philological and mystical, in the historical writings of the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1601–1680), a scholar and writer of great breadth and versatility, in order to show the importance of this Hermetic point of view in establishing a unified vision of the history of philosophy (cf. Yates, pp. 425–31). Finally a brief but very interesting text, written at about the same time as the *De mystica Aegyptiorum et Chaldaeorum philosophia*: it was entitled *Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone* and was sent to Cardinal Borromeo between 1590 and 1591, but remained unpublished until modern times (now to be found in F. Patrizi da Cherso, *Lettere ed opuscoli inediti*, ed. D. Aguzzi Barbagli (Florence, 1975), pp. 175–88). The vision of the history of philosophy as the transmission of a unified wisdom, both divine and natural in character, is defined more closely through specific historiographical indications. The writing of philosophy in dialogue form, affirms Patrizi, began with Hermes Trismegistus “more than eleven hundred years before Plato” and was thereafter transmitted, by way of initiation, to Orpheus (who learned it from the priest Ethemon), to Aglaophemus (from Ochaapi), to Pythagoras (from Pateneit), to Solon (from Psenopis), to Plato (from Sechnuphis). (The Egyptian names are drawn from Proclus, Plutarch, and Clement of Alexandria.)

In writing his dialogues Plato was trying to imitate Hermes, not only in the form but also in the depth of wisdom (*Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone*, ed. D. Aguzzi Barbagli, *op. cit.*, pp. 175–6). On the basis of these initial convictions Patrizi then proceeds to classify Plato's dialogues: each of them is examined for the level of wisdom attained and for the profound, hidden qualities it contains. Patrizi selects the ten dialogues in which, in his view, “Plato enclosed all his philosophy”, for which he proposes the following order: *Alcibiades I*, *Philebus*, *Sophist*, *Politicus*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, *Republic*, *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, *Phaedo* (*Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone*, p. 177). Other dialogues are inserted between these principal ones, functioning like corollaries to the main kernel of the argument; the *Laws* is claimed to be the last dialogue chronologically, but not the last in order of importance, bearing in mind that it is concerned mainly with the application of “particular laws”: that is, with “very specific questions, to be put into practice rather than theorized about” (*Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone*, p. 187).

References to the sum of philosophy inherited from previous traditions of thought are to be found distributed throughout “Plato's books”. According to Patrizi, Plato had known how to conceal in them “the secret of the books of Mercurius [i.e. Hermes Trismegistus]”. Most ancient and Greek traditions of wisdom converge into a single majestic ‘corpus’: whoever understands its structure, order, and deepest motions of thought will be able to reconstruct the history of God's natural revelation to humanity. Plato, in not declaring anything about the order of his dialogues, “wished to follow the secret of Mercurius' books in another way”: that is, by concealing his philo-

sophy from the unworthy. One of his methods of concealment was "to scatter all the sciences everywhere and through each of them (*spargere per quasi tutti essi e per ciascuno*)"; another consisted in appearing not to bring his dialogues to a conclusion; yet another was the technique of elaborating his arguments as it were behind a veil. This had the effect at times of putting him (Plato) in the position of someone who puts forward and conceals particular truths which he has discovered for himself; at other times in the condition of one divinely inspired who is concealing the truth "either behind figures and numerological symbols or beneath mythical allegories (*o sotto figura e numeri matematici, o sotto allegoria di favole*)". For Patrizi, these procedures were the true heritage of the thought of remote antiquity, both barbarian and Greek. It had been inspired variously by Mercurius (Trismegistus), the ancient poets, Pythagoras, and Orpheus (*Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone*, pp. 177-8). The *Philosophia perennis* is interpreted by Patrizi in the following way: a philosophy emerges from Greek and barbarian peoples together, before finding in Plato an acute interpreter with a profound vision of its capacity to become organized thought; as a result it then spread throughout the world, impeded only by Aristotle's school. The Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the West rejected Plato's philosophy because of the obscurity and complexity of the dialogues which engendered "either disdain or desperation". Platonic doctrine "has therefore been abandoned in our time, in spite of the fact that since Plato's death, for more than eighteen hundred and fifty years it has not ceased to be read and studied publicly, in Athens, Alexandria, Rome, and in Constantinople until its capture by the Turks". Patrizi contrasts this seeming state of abandonment of such a widely accepted and successful philosophy with the dangerous advancement of Aristotle's thought: "Having lain buried for more than eight hundred years, Aristotle rose again four hundred years ago, and, although a great enemy of Christianity, took his place in Christian seats of learning (*è sottentrato nelle cattedre de' Cristianio*), causing the loss of many souls, [being] those who believed his dogma and were poisoned by impiety against God and Christ Jesus" (*Dell'ordine de' libri di Platone*, p. 178). Those philosophers who wish to restore Plato's vision and reduce the pernicious influence of Aristotle's philosophy should study the history of ancient thought as a process whose culmination lies in the complexity of Plato's dialogues. To reconstruct "the order of Plato's books" is to rediscover the *philosophia perennis* and so to make it a pivot for the restoration of the study of authentic "revealed" philosophy.⁴

⁴ We should not forget the solid presence of Hermetic ideas as an element for interpreting the history of philosophy in an immense work of commentary on the *Pimander* and the *Asclepius*, which appeared in the years when Patrizi was preparing the *Nova de universis philosophia*. They were published as: *Pymander Hermetis Mercurii Trismegisti cum commento fratris Hannibalis Rosseli calabri*, 5 vols. (Cracow, 1585-6), and *Asclepius Mercurii Trismegisti cum commento Hannibalis Rosseli calabri* (Cracow, 1590) (the commentary is limited to Book 1 of the *Asclepius*, on the immortality of the soul). Concerning Hannibal Rosseli,

3. THE RENAISSANCE IDEA OF CONCORDISM IN PHILOSOPHY

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the other pole of philosophical culture in Medicean Florence, put forward, over and above the theory of the unified and organic development of thought from the *prisca theologia*, his own version of the historical vision of the unity of philosophies. This was the theory that such a unity of thought could be verified by demonstrating the agreement between the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. The fact of the common origins of humanity's speculative traditions meant that the two greatest thinkers of antiquity had in common an essential kernel of philosophy.

According to Pico the essential unity between Platonism and Aristotelianism can be shown both speculatively, by using the interpretative method evolved for the Cabbala, and historically, through studying the development of ancient thought. Pico, the 'prince of the concordists', followed both methods. While giving due weight to the disagreements between those who upheld Plato's supremacy and those, halfway through the fifteenth century, who upheld Aristotle's, he at the same time remarked on the importance of giving full historical consideration to the question of a reconciliation between these two greatest of all thinkers. He was conscious of the need, pointed out by George of Trebizond, to consider the 'reality' (*res*) and not merely the 'words' (*verba*) when interpreting ancient philosophers (particularly Aristotle), and of the need for forging links between the doctrines of the ancient thinkers and their later development in the medieval schools. He was also fully aware of the attitude represented by the concordist position assumed by Bessarion.

Pico della Mirandola's famous letter to Ermolao Barbaro on the value of scholastic thought was undoubtedly inspired by the position expressed by George of Trebizond in his *Adversus Theodorum Gazam in perversionem problematum Aristotelis*, dating back to 1453-4. Pico's understanding of the

a Capuchin monk from Calabria who lived for a long time in France and Poland, cf. L. Wadding, *Scriptores ordinis minorum* (Rome, 1650), pp. 159-62; E. Garin, *La cultura filosofica del Rinascimento italiano*, (Florence, 1961), p. 152; and Yates, pp. 179-81. Rosseli's commentary (which was later republished in Cologne in 1630) contains a large number of historical-philosophical observations: he tends to follow a brief passage or a simple phrase from the *Pimander* or the *Asclepius* with extremely long commentaries of his own, divided into chapters, in which he frequently cites the opinions of ancient and medieval philosophers relating to the matters under consideration. For example, the commentary on the first lines of the *Pimander* takes the form of a full-fledged treatise *De mundi creatione*, followed by *De elementorum origine, ordine, numero et qualitatibus*, *De cognoscendo Deo*, *De mente Dei*, and so on. Between each of these treatises appears a historical review of the ideas of ancient thinkers. Thus for the creation of the world Rosseli presents first Thales' theories, then those of Anaximander, Anaximenes, Diogenes of Apollonia, Hippasus, Heraclitus, Democritus, Leucippus, Epicurus, Xenophanes, Aristippus, Metrodorus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, the Platonists, Aristotle (and Averroës). This is then followed by another theoretical treatise which goes back to the various authors again, and even introduces some new ones, such as Avicenna and the Spanish Renaissance Scholastics.

historical development of the Aristotelian tradition is the same as that of George of Trebizond when he condemned Theodore Gaza's elegant translations of Aristotle. Aristotelian philosophy should be understood, according to George, for itself and not as part of a search for formal elegance ("Therefore those who translated Aristotle should follow the man himself, not other people; for if he follows others he does not translate but perverts and ruins everything (*non vertit, sed pervertit evertitque omnia*)": George of Trebizond, *Adversus Theodorum Gazam in perversionem problematum Aristotelis*, in L. Mohler, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann*, Vol. III (Paderborn, 1942), p. 281). The value of the translations made by the medieval scholastics (the *prisci interpretes*, or 'ancient interpreters': Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus, Aegidius, Thomas Aquinas) was crucial for the maturing of Occidental Latin thought. Without this patient, if not elegant, work, affirmed George of Trebizond, "there would have been no more recent philosophers among the Latins; and had they not existed, I too should not possess what little philosophy I have attained" (*Adversus Theodorum Gazam*, p. 324). Pico was of the same opinion even when pointing out in Rome the disagreement on the nine hundred *Conclusiones*, and he gave a great deal of space to the medieval Aristotelian tradition seen in itself and valued for its historical significance as the development and perfection of the theories of an ancient thinker. To reappropriate and reappraise the speculative propositions expressed in ancient thought was for him the best way to bring about the clarification of the positions of all the different philosophical schools, and thus ultimately the best way to effect a comparison between Platonism and Aristotelianism.

Pico attributed considerable historical importance to Aristotle's thought and dealt widely with scholastic thinking in his own writings: this implied for him the initiation of a process of discourse with the past for the recovery of that inheritance which ancient philosophy had left to the Middle Ages, which had then developed it. It indicated, too, the recognition that it was philosophy's prerogative to have been in a state of constant development from the time of its remote origins in antiquity. It was not possible, Pico affirmed in the *Oratio de hominis dignitate* (composed as an introduction to the nine hundred *Conclusiones*), to follow only one philosophical sect. No school could be justified in itself without reference to the whole history of philosophy. The only choice for the true philosopher was to understand the historical dynamic which prompted the emergence and flowering of the various schools and the modalities which governed their points of agreement and disagreement.

But I adopted the principle of swearing allegiance to none, spreading myself instead among all the teachers of philosophy, reading all their books, identifying all their schools and sects (*omnes familias agnoscerem*). Therefore, since I had to speak about them all (lest, if

I defended my private opinion and set less store by the rest, I should seem bound to it), it was inevitable that even if only a few things were said on each topic, a great number should be said about all together. Nor let anyone condemn me for seeking any port in a storm; it was a rule with all the ancients to turn over every kind of writing and leave no available treatises unread, but in particular with Aristotle, whom Plato called *anagnostes*, that is 'reader'; and it is indeed the mark of a narrow mind to have confined oneself within the Porch [i.e. the Stoa, meeting place of the Stoics] or Academy alone. Nor can he rightly choose his own school out of them all who has not first acquired familiar knowledge of them all. Moreover, in every sect there is something notable not shared with the others (Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio de hominis dignitate*, ed. E. Garin (Florence, 1942), pp. 138-40; trans. E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller, J. H. Randall as *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (Chicago, 1948), pp. 223-54).

In compiling the nine hundred *Conclusiones* (four hundred of which are expressly designated as being "historical") the list of thinkers and schools which Pico particularly set out to examine included the ancient Peripatetics, "Greek" and "Asiatic" Platonists, Arab scholars, and Latin Scholastics (*Oratio de hominis dignitate*, pp. 140-41): each of the various tendencies represented might well have made its peculiar contribution to the search for truth. Even the errors into which several of them fell had contributed towards making the search more vigorous.

Furthermore, if there is any sect that attacks opinions with any truth in them and mocks the good things of the mind with slanders, it strengthens, not weakens, the truth, and rouses it like a shaken flame and does not put it out. Moved by this reason, I wished to publish the tenets not of one doctrine (as some counselled) but of every kind, so that by comparison of these numerous sects and discussion of philosophy in its many aspects, that blaze of truth that Plato mentions in his *Letters* might shine more clearly in our minds like the sun arising from the deep (*Oratio de hominis dignitate*, p. 142).

Going back still further Pico discusses the 'original' wisdom of the ancients, from which all philosophy is derived, mentioning in particular Hermes Trismegistus, the Chaldeans, Pythagoras, and Hebrew philosophy. These fundamental doctrines inspired the philosophical ideas of Plato and Aristotle. The design now becomes clearer: from the historical study of the later ancient and medieval traditions it is necessary to proceed backwards in order to recover the unified speculative inspiration which had first inspired philosophical experience in Plato and Aristotle. In Pico's hypothesis the history of philosophy takes the form of an awareness of the unity of thought which is first outlined in a fragmentary but historically fertile and productive manner through the study of the different traditions and schools, and then clarified

through recourse to the 'ancient theologies' which stood at the beginning of the two greatest philosophies in the ancient world. Thus Plato and Aristotle are the keys to understanding the whole. The differences in their perspectives hide a profound unity of intent. Many of the later ancient philosophers — Boethius, Simplicius, Augustine, John Philoponus — had understood this, but were unable to prove it. It was necessary to compare and reconcile their opinions in order to make explicit an agreement which had always existed but had never been fully understood (*Oratio de homines dignitate*, pp. 144–6).

The search for an agreement between Plato and Aristotle brought Pico close to the 'concordist' solution proposed by Bessarion in his *In calumniatorem Platonis*. This introduced the second element in the dispute between Greek scholars, namely, that which aims to compare the philosophical experience of Plato and Aristotle in historical terms as a means to establishing how close they were to Christian doctrines. Bessarion had not wanted to make a comparison of their texts so as to prove the superiority of one over the other. He proposed to talk chiefly about Plato in order to defend his doctrines and rectify the inaccuracies supposedly put forward on his behalf, and also wished to show that Aristotelian philosophy could not be described as antithetical to Platonism (Bessarion, *In calumniatorem Platonis*, in L. Mohler, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsman*, Vol. II (Paderborn, 1927), p. 11). He had shown through the use of texts and commentaries that both Plato and Aristotle had sometimes expressed doctrines which contrasted with Christian ones and that neither of them could truly be considered as precursors of revealed truth: even so, it was not possible to deny the sincere effort made by both of them to deepen their knowledge of the truth. His task was to neutralize the various assertions of Aristotle's 'supremacy' over Plato and to tone down the exaggerated praises of the Byzantine Platonists. "Nor is it my intention," he wrote, "to show that Aristotle was wrong, but rather that Plato was not wrong, since even Aristotle says the same things as Plato. Therefore let it be the case that Aristotle thinks rightly (*recte opinetur*), and not otherwise than Plato" (*In calumniatorem Platonis*, p. 371). Pico intended to proceed in this direction. Going beyond the straightforward historical comparison of their doctrines, he wished to show the extent to which Plato's and Aristotle's opinions depended on the insights expressed in ancient wisdom.

Pico's research into the ancient sources of such unitary wisdom, and his consequent demonstration of the agreement between Plato and Aristotle, remains a sketch however. His great work on the 'concord' between the two greatest philosophers was never written (and it is by no means easy to understand how Braun, p. 54, can have imagined its existence). All we have by way reference is the allusions to the project contained in the *Conclusiones* and a number of indications in the *Apologia*, *De Ente et Uno*, and *Heptaplus*. From the evidence of these works, however, we can clearly assume that the

method of establishing and confirming this agreement would have involved a primarily historical use of texts. Pico's historical theses in the *Conclusiones* draw on the most disparate texts, written in several languages, in order to present each school's most important propositions on a number of different theological, metaphysical, physical, psychological, and ethical problems (for example, 41 theses are given to Arab and Hebrew thinkers, and 47 to the *prisci theologi*). This conforms to Pico's declared wish to remain faithful to the statements expressly affirmed in the texts. Passing to the theoretical texts, however, he declares his intention of demonstrating that, over and above textual agreements (*verbis*), Plato and Aristotle agreed also in substance (*sensu et re*) (Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones sive theses DCCCC Romae anno 1486 publice disputandae, sed non admissae*, ed. B. Kieszkowski (Geneva, 1973), p. 54). He passes continuously from exact textual statement to the technique of reducing it to a different wording, in which form it can be integrated with the statements of other philosophies. He maintains that such a technique is possible because the wording and formulations of ancient wisdom, especially those of the Cabbala, contained, as it were *in potentia*, a significant number of the ancient doctrines that were later elaborated in other philosophies. Apparently divergent positions should be interpreted as having developed out of earlier ideas affirmed in the ancient tradition, and should be traced back to them.

Cabbalistic wisdom remains in the background both as 'original' wisdom and as a method or interpretation suggesting the kind of understanding which is able to discover in Plato's and Aristotle's doctrines a more profound meaning than the literal or straightforward one. In one of the *Conclusiones Cabalisticæ secundum opinionem propriam* Pico wrote:

Like the ancient philosophers who veiled in myths and apologetic arguments the more divine philosophy, so Aristotle himself disguised it with the appearance of philosophical speculation, moreover obscuring it further by the terseness of his diction (*verborum brevitate*). In the same way Rabbi Moses of Egypt, in the book the Latins call *Dux neutrorum* [i.e., *The Guide to the Perplexed*], appears outwardly, but superficially (*per superficialem verborum corticem*), to be marching with philosophy; but the hidden comprehension of his deepest meaning (*per latentes profundi sensus intelligencias*) reveals that he is in fact embracing the mysteries of the Cabbala (*Conclusiones*, p. 89).

The reference to Moses Maimonides indicates that, in Pico's view, medieval Cabbalists had been able to trace Greek thought, including that of Aristotle, back to its authentic origins in ancient wisdom. The invitation to follow such an example in this, the period of the rebirth of ancient philosophy, is clear.

Pico's vision of the history of philosophy therefore sought unity of thought not so much in a single and uninterrupted tradition (as intended by

Ficino) as in a great quantity of different schools and tendencies sharing a common origin to which they could be traced back through the application of a universal method of interpretation. For this reason Plato was not the single most important thinker in the history of philosophy: that distinction he shared with Aristotle. They and their doctrines represented that crucial moment in the history of philosophy when it was possible to observe a burgeoning of different speculative approaches, due more to the inherent richness than to the fundamental divergence of the positions adopted by different thinkers. The historical pattern which ensued consisted of a development of ideas and doctrines in which the very diversity of styles, languages, and methods contributed to a notable enrichment of philosophy, but at the same time induced a sense of despair at the seeming impossibility of ever being able to arrive at the truth through the power of thought alone. The time had come, Pico claimed, to clarify this diversity and eliminate every misunderstanding. The destiny of philosophical research lay in the recognition that this very diversity depended on, and should be shown to lead back to, a unity the reconstruction of which necessarily required the use of historical enquiry. The delineation of such a philosophical unity should result from the careful consideration of its historical diversity. For the security that arises directly out of the gradual diffusion of the whole Platonic tradition Pico substituted a security constructed from the application of a universal interpretative method. This method, starting out from the recognition and conscious appropriation of historical multiplicity, arrived at a unified speculative position by means of a continuous reduction of the form of words in the different traditions to the original form in which they had originated (which was essentially Mosaic-Cabbalistic).

The challenge of Pico's vision was to arrive at a deeper understanding both of ancient wisdom and of late-antique and medieval philosophy. The first served to establish the outline of a unified doctrine, as received through divine revelation; the second served to increase the understanding of its inexhaustible richness. Instead, during the course of the sixteenth century, Pico's thought was understood to have shown the possibility of an accord between Plato and Aristotle. This misunderstanding went hand in hand with the application of a quite different methodology from the one he had intended. The declared objective of those who described themselves as followers of Pico was simply to demonstrate that Plato and Aristotle in fact spoke with one voice. The theory of a common original inspiration which permitted a unified understanding of both philosophies, in spite of their differences of expression, terminology, and method, was only partly understood. This resulted in a great many 'concordist' books, whose historical value appears distinctly limited. Instead of broadening the real scope and dimensions of Plato's and Aristotle's thought, there came about an anti-historical levelling of their doctrines in order to arrive at a unified

presentation, which in practice removed all possibility of revealing the true face and character of either thinker.

The search for agreement, expressed as 'euphony' or 'consonance' (*concordia, symphonia*) between the two philosophers, became fashionable in sixteenth-century culture, even in scholarly circles. The very Platonists who followed Ficino were contaminated by it and partly abandoned the vision of their master who had insisted on the study of the evolution of the Platonic line. Thus for example Francesco de' Vieri, known as 'Verino secondo' (he was the nephew of Francesco de' Vieri, known as 'Verino primo', a follower of Ficino who had taught at the University of Pisa), attempted just such a unified concordist study of Plato's and Aristotle's thought in the light of Christian doctrine. He wrote the work in Italian, under the title *Vere conclusioni di Platone conformi alla Dottrina christiana et a quella d'Aristotele* (Florence, 1590), and included in it a group of fifteen Platonic theses, reinforced with further theses drawn from Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen. Already in the *Compendio della dottrina di Platone in quello che ella è conforme con la Fede nostra* (Florence, 1576) he had outlined in sixteen chapters the lineaments of Platonic thought in comparison with Christian theology and Patristic and Scholastic philosophy. In the next book he followed a more differentiated and nuanced procedure in comparing Platonic theories with ancient philosophical ideas from Zoroaster and Moses to the end of the Middle Ages (Dante and Petrarch). However, the chief aim of the work was always to show the concord of the two greatest of all philosophers, based on their fifteen fundamental theses (which are called 'Platonic', but are ultimately Aristotelian as well), as well as to clarify the obscure passages in Plato's writing by comparing the uncertain ideas with those that were certain, and to show the substantial accord between the methods of exposition by dialogue and by demonstration.

Even a straightforward survey of the overall range of works produced on this topic, in order merely to show the vastness of the concordist phenomenon, would be impossible here. We shall necessarily have to confine ourselves to a more limited scope, noting simply a number of cases in which the theory of Platonic-Aristotelian accord comes to signify also an accord of other traditions and doctrines, either arising out of the work of the two philosophers, or seeking to distinguish themselves from them. Thus for example Symphorien Champier, a physician and humanist from Lyons, remained faithful to the Ficinian ideal of seeking unity of thought in the historical multiplicity of different philosophies. Part of his *Symphonia Platonis cum Aristotele et Galeni cum Hippocrate* (Paris, 1514) is devoted to elucidating the historical background to the thought of Plato and Aristotle. Addressing himself to his interlocutor (Etienne Ponché, Bishop of Paris) Champier begins by explaining the three principal traditions of philosophy in the ancient world: the first flourished in Gaul among the Druids ("these

profess to know the size and shape of the earth and the world, the movements of heaven and the stars, and what the gods will"); the second flourished in Italy and was founded by Pythagoras; the third flourished in Greece, and its chief exponent was Aristotle, the disciple of Plato. The tradition of Greek philosophy appeared by far the most fertile, including as it did the two greatest scholars of medicine, Hippocrates and Galen, and the two greatest philosophers, Plato and Aristotle (*Symphonia*, fol. ix^{r-v}). These four authors' ideas concerning physics and natural philosophy represented the synthesis of all ancient thought: in the opinion of Champier they had received a substantial inheritance from previous traditions of ancient wisdom, beginning with that of the Druids (which he considers, with a certain patriotic bias, to have been one of the most ancient) together with the that of the Indians (*Symphonia*, 'Ad maximum antistitem dominum Stephanum Poncherium Parrhisiensem episcopum dignissimum', fol. xv). The list of philosophies which appears in the first chapter of Champier's work is derived from Ficino's vision of the ancient tradition: after the Druids and the Brachmanes came the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Phoenicians, the Hebrews, the Thracians (with Linus, Musaeus, and Orpheus), and the Greeks (*Symphonia*, fols. xi^r-xiv^r).

During the course of his discussion of the terms in which the accord, or what he calls the *symphonia*, between the four philosophers could be expressed, Champier refers constantly to the entire corpus of ancient physics, including the ideas of Thales, Empedocles, and all the physiologists; this procedure is intended to allow the presentation of ancient thought as a unified tradition. The exposition of Plato's 'medical' thought in the appendix to the *Symphonia* (in two sections, entitled 'Platonica medicina' and 'Speculum medicinale platonium' respectively) emphasizes Plato's dependence on the entire system of ancient cosmology; and it attempts, through a series of quotations, adduced dialogue by dialogue, to reveal Platonic philosophy as the synthesis of the combined efforts of all Greek and non-Greek philosophers. The appendix also contains a text entitled 'Apologia de studio humanae philosophiae', in which Champier is even more concerned to demonstrate the theory of the unity of ancient thought. It is directed against the *De studio divinae et humanae philosophiae* of Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola and is dedicated, significantly, to Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. In it Champier affirms the role of the most ancient philosophers, Plato and the Platonists, as precursors of Christian theology; Mercurius Trismegistus, Orpheus, and Plato are frequently quoted to affirm the unity of inspiration of pagan philosophy and to identify that inspiration as essentially 'theological'. For this reason 'human' philosophy should not be rejected by the Christian tradition, but accepted in the same way as patristic and scholastic philosophy is accepted. Plato and Mercurius should be understood as preparing the way for the coming of Christ, an explanatory device which made

it possible to avoid the heretical use of their ideas such as had occurred in the case of Origen and Arius, who appeared to have made the revelation of Christ conform to Platonic philosophy, rather than the other way round: "It is not Christ's sayings that must be adapted to Plato's doctrine, but Plato's or Hermes' words to Christ's doctrine" (*Literarum humanorum apologia* (Paris, 1514), fol. CLIX^r). The unity of ancient thought is the unity of an evolution whose goal is the unfolding of Christian thought in all its fullness: Patristic philosophy is superior to Pagan philosophy because it represents the development of elements prepared by the latter within a unified tradition. When in his *De triplici disciplina* (Leiden, 1508) Champier mentions Pico's version of the *Admonitio Gentium* attributed to St Justin Martyr, the idea of a Pagan 'preparation' for the light of the Revelation, understood as a precursor of Christian thought in the realm of 'natural' theology, was already clear in his mind. His later elaboration of a reasoned defence of human philosophy merely confirms this vision of the history of philosophy as a unified tradition.

The philosopher and scholar Jacopo Mazzoni, who was in close contact with the young Galileo, put forward an interesting version of the concordist theory. He applied himself to the task of demonstrating the fundamental unity of human thought from the time of the dispute at Bologna in 1577 which examined no less than 5197 theses: *De triplici hominum vita, activa nempe et contemplativa et religiosa, methodi tres, quaestionibus quinque millibus centum et nonaginta septem distinctae, in quibus omnes Platonis et Aristotelis, multae verum aliorum Graecorum, Arabum et Latinorum in universo scientiarum orbe discordiae componuntur*. Then, towards the end of the century, Mazzoni arrived at a considered and mature expression of the idea which lay closest to his heart: this long-meditated work was the *In universam Platonis et Aristotelis philosophiam praeludia, sive De comparatione Platonis et Aristotelis*, which was published in Venice in 1597. He begins with a sort of critical survey or review of concordism, during the course of which he rejects the procedures of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Symphorien Champier, both of whom had simply made a compilation of the two authors' statements, in the form of a series of theses, in order to compare and unify them. He also rejected the strenuous attempt made by the Spanish philosopher Sebastian Fox Morcillo to achieve a consensus of the two philosophers at any cost. Morcillo had published a work entitled *De naturae philosophia, seu de Platonis et Aristotelis consensione* (Louvain, 1554; new edn: Paris, 1560), in which he assiduously collected the ideas of ancient thinkers on the problems of natural philosophy, examining and reviewing them all with reference to the *Timaeus* and to Aristotle's *Physics*. Mazzoni held such methods to be completely contrary to the laws of historical research and denied that the first could properly be defined concordist. For a true scholar the only authentic form of concordism was to examine the ideas of these two greatest of

philosophers respecting "both the agreement and disagreement . . . in their tenets (*dogmatis*), but without interposing any judgement". Plato and Aristotle should be studied with maximum objectivity, and, in making the comparison, room should be made for every kind of criticism or agreement. This was the way to obtain a complete picture of philosophy in antiquity. The tradition of ancient thought could then be seen to be unified in the sense that a variety of philosophical positions could be seen to have merged harmoniously in the doctrines of the two greatest philosophers, doctrines which, in the final analysis, summed up philosophy in its entirety (*In universam Platonis et Aristotelis philosophiam praeludia* (Venice, 1597), p. 2).

As Nicholas of Cusa had done, Mazzoni likened philosophical research to a hunt. He saw philosophers as hounds pursuing their prey, keeping error at bay with their howling. Of the great number of hounds involved in the chase, carrying on the 'hunt for wisdom' in ancient thought, Mazzoni confirmed that he had always followed two, "namely, Plato and Aristotle, who more than all others were wont to tear (*carpere*) at her [sc. wisdom], opening up her flank with most acute and solid reasonings, so that her deepest mysteries, as it were [her] inmost entrails (*quasi intima . . . viscera*), became visible to any who looked closely" (*In universam Platonis et Aristotelis philosophiam praeludia*, 'Dedicatio', fol. [I]^v). Ancient philosophy was summed up by these, the two greatest philosophers, in the sense that they covered more ground than other thinkers. The theory of an agreement and a substantial unity of ideas was converted to the theory of a plurality of speculative contributions within classical philosophy, and of the excellence of Plato and Aristotle's solutions. This is abundantly clear in the structure of Mazzoni's book, in which he abandoned the pattern of comparing and contrasting different verbal formulations in order to elaborate fully those problems which illustrate the key questions of philosophical research: from the purpose of man to the proper use of philosophy, passing through the crucial questions of criteriology, gnosiology, anthropology, psychology, physics, ethics, and politics.

During the course of the sixteenth century the theory of a unified tradition of philosophy made converts not only in the Platonic camp but also among the Aristotelians. A number of Aristotelians accepted both the concordist method and the historical vision which saw Aristotle's philosophy as one moment in the unified current of speculative thought which had begun in the wisdom of antiquity. The first of these was Cristostomo Javelli de Casale in his *Civilis philosophiae ad mentem Platonis dispositio* (Venice, 1536) and *Totius rationalis naturalis, divinae ac moralis philosophiae compendium innumeris fere locis castigatum et in duos tomos digestum* (Leiden, 1568).

He was followed by Antonio Montecatini, *In Politica, hoc est in civiles libros Aristotelis . . . progymnasmata* (Ferrara, 1587), and Paolo Beni, *In Timaeum Platonis, sive in naturalem atque divinam Platonis et Aristotelis*

Philosophiam decades tres (Rome, 1594). The *Adversus M. Tullii Ciceronis Academicas Quaestiones disputatio, qua omnium pene philosophorum opinio de percepienda veritate comprehenditur et Aristotelis prae omnium celebratur philosophia* (Bologna, 1558) of Giulio Castellani di Faenza represents a contribution to the debate which is in many respects new. Castellani outlined the possible agreement between the Aristotelian, Platonic, and pre-Sophistic philosophies in the context of an argument against scepticism — this he did during the course of an analysis of Plato's Academy in which he criticized its tendency towards probabilism, and went so far as to consider the thought of Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus as two extreme phases of the sceptical position. The purpose of his historical review was to prove the falsity of scepticism and to reaffirm the unity of the endeavour represented by the search for truth within ancient philosophy. As a fervent Aristotelian, Castellani could accept neither Gianfrancesco Pico's anti-Aristotelian polemic (which, as we shall see, was amply developed in the *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium*) nor the 'dissolution' of the philosophy of antiquity under the accusation of vanity (Giulio Castellani di Faenza, *Adversus M. Tullii Ciceronis Academicas Quaestiones disputatio*, pp. 96–103). He therefore set out to show that a great many of the ancient philosophers were really in agreement with the principal Aristotelian-Platonic ideas concerning metaphysics, and simultaneously to point out the difficulties in theories of scepticism, from the more moderate to the most radical.⁵

The last representative of concordist Aristotelianism was Giovanni Battista Bernardi (fl. 1577–1585), a Venetian nobleman who lived between Padua and Venice in the second half of the sixteenth century and was author of a book entitled *Seminarium totius philosophiae, . . . Quod omnium Philosophorum, eorumdemque interpretum tam Graecorum, quam Latinorum, ac etiam Arabum Quaestiones, Conclusiones, Sententiae omnes integras et absolutas miro ordine digestas complectitur*, 2 vols. (Venice, 1582). This work was a collection, arranged in alphabetical order by concepts, of the particular contributions made to the tradition of speculative thought by Aristotle, his school, and his annotators. Three years later Bernardi added a third volume to the work, still under the title *Seminarium totius philosophiae*, but devoted (as the subtitle indicates) to the study of the philosophy of Plato and his school: *In quo, quemadmodum in duobus superioribus omnis Aristotelis, Aristotelicorumque*

⁵ It should be remembered that during these same years, 1555–6, a similar impulse prompted Guy de Brués to compose a dialogue directed 'against the new Academicians': *Les Dialogues de Guy de Brués, Contre les Nouveaux Académiciens Que Tout ne consiste point en opinion* (Paris, 1557). In this work the preoccupation with matters of philology and erudition intentionally takes second place. However, the powerful need for completeness and full documentation motivates the author to place the arguments and ideas of ancient philosophers concerning many of the questions intrinsic to the problem of knowledge into the mouths of Ronsard and Baïf. Cf. M. K. Bénouis, *Le dialogue philosophique dans la littérature française du seizième siècle* (The Hague, 1976), pp. 157–171. See also the commentary to the modern edn: P. P. Morphos (ed.), *The Dialogues of Guy de Brués: A Critical Edition with a Study in Renaissance Scepticism and Relativism* (Baltimore, 1953).

omnium philosophorum doctrina continebatur, ita omnis Platonis, Platoniorumque omnium tam Graecorum, quam Latinorum et Arabum et eorum quidem tam veterum, quam iuniorum philosophorum doctrina facillimo ordine digesta continetur (Venice, 1585). Later the *Seminarium* appeared in a longer, corrected version. This edition was published at Lyons in three volumes: the first two, both issued in 1599, dealt with Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy; the third, entitled *Seminarium totius philosophiae Stoicae* (1605), was intended as a study of the terminology and certain key passages of Stoic philosophy.⁶

The *Seminarium* is interesting as an attempt to organize ancient philosophy into a sort of dictionary of concepts characterized both by its systematic and articulate structure and by the fact that it makes constant reference to the basic texts of the Platonic and Aristotelian schools. The part devoted to Stoicism seems to have been carelessly put together: the edition of 1605 contains only 102 pages, and the work cannot properly be called a review of Stoic philosophy since the first part (pp. 3–72) mentions chiefly ideas and sayings gathered from ancient moral wisdom (the Seven Wise Men, Pythagoras) and the second part (pp. 73–102) is a compilation of key passages extracted from Seneca. Plato is seen as the author who reconciles philosophical ‘research’ with theological ‘tension’, literary elegance with moral passion. His role in the history of philosophy is seen to be more wide-ranging than that of Aristotle, even though the latter is unsurpassed for speculative vigour and terminological clarity. For Bernardi, Plato is a sort of compendium, or summation, of ancient philosophy. It is interesting to note that even Timaeus of Locri and Mercurius Trismegistus appear in the index of names of ‘Platonic’ philosophers preceding the dictionary of terms:

It should not appear absurd if in this very volume some author be found who, though long preceding Plato in time, yet follows him in sequence. For both because of Plato’s flourishing knowledge of sublime matters, and because his divinity has been celebrated in every region of the earth with constant fame and on all men’s tongues, I could never be persuaded to cast him down from the higher rung of dignity (G. B. Bernardi, *Seminarium totius philosophiae*, Vol. III (Venice, 1585), ‘Dedicatio Joanni Aloisio filio’, fol. 1^v).

The example of Bernardi’s work serves to show that concordism resulted in a spirit of compilation: the historical-speculative theory of the unity of ancient thought, as such, no longer predominates, but instead we find the conscious recognition of a scholarly task or duty associated with the theory — that is, the duty to provide the terminological instruments and the relevant quotations which shall furnish the historical materials and framework for studying the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies, their genesis, and the traditions to which they gave rise. A complete reading of the works of

⁶ For information on the editions of the *Seminarium* see D. Clement, *Bibliothèque curieuse, historique et critique ou catalogue raisonné des livres difficiles à trouver*, Vol. III, (Göttingen, 1752), pp. 195–200.

Aristotle on the one hand and of Plato on the other led to the compilation of a dictionary of terms, concepts, and expressions, the usefulness of which was twofold: it had the potential to become a review of the conceptual contributions made to ancient philosophy, as well as being a useful reference work. In this sense the *Seminarium* is related to polyhistorical writings that did not take up an exact precise speculative point of view, but aimed to lay out and apportion their bibliographical material within a systematic framework, based on the traditional division of academic research. It is not by chance that Bernardi found a certain favour in the eyes of Morhof (*Polyhistor literarius*, ch. 21, § 28, p. 242, and *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 7, § 2, p. 34; ch. 11, § 31, p. 46): while he begins working within the speculative concordist tradition, he finishes by rendering it inoperative as a historical-interpretative method; in his hands it comes to serve purely as a frame of reference for the collection of quotations and terms it contains.

4. THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL USE OF SEXTUS EMPIRICUS FROM GIANFRANCESCO PICO TO MONTAIGNE

The two main strands so far discussed — the historicization of ancient thought brought about by humanist scholarship, and the theory of unity within a developing tradition in the history of philosophy — joined forces in declaring the importance of studying the thought of the past as part of the rebirth of man and a renaissance of true faith, consonant with the purposes of human culture.

There was a solid array of scholars all proclaiming the idea of a historical continuity between pagan and Christian thought. Their historiographical endeavour served to confirm them in the belief that Patristic and Scholastic philosophy (at least in part) was no more than the development of the speculative ideas of their predecessors, the Pagan philosophers, influenced and prepared by ancient Hebrew thought. The most extreme example of this theory was a work by Muzio Pansa of Penne (1560–1640), entitled *De osculo seu consensu ethnicae et christianae philosophiae tractatus. Unde Chaldaeorum, Aegyptiorum, Persarum, Arabum, Graecorum et Latinorum mysteria, tam quam ab Hebraeis desumpta fidei nostrae consona de Deo deducuntur*, and published in Chieti in 1601 and in Marburg in 1605.

In this work Pansa saw the relationship between the pagan philosophers, poets, and theologians and the Christian religion as being the result of an act of divine illumination which, beginning with the Jews, had pervaded the whole of the ancient world. This could be clearly seen, according to Pansa, on the evidence and authority of Justin, Cyril, Eusebius, Augustine: that is to say, in the works of the Church Fathers, both Greek and Latin, who were the first to grasp the essential continuity (more supernatural than natural)

between the pagan world and the thought arising out of Christian revelation (Muzio Pansa, *De osculo seu consensu ethnicae et christianae philosophiae* (Marburg, 1605), 'Proemium', pp. 4-5).

A dissenting voice arose to challenge this concordist vision as it was being consolidated at the beginning of the sixteenth century, thus introducing a contrary view at the very period when the idea of such a continuity was being celebrated.

According to this dissenting view, classical pagan philosophy was full of error — weak, unreliable, and changeable, unable to arrive at the truth; only with the coming of Christ did the possibility of certainty arise, a certainty which was nothing other than the light of the Word. Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, the nephew of Giovanni Pico and spiritual heir to his work, as well as being a dedicated follower of Savonarola through life and death, rejected the core of his uncle's philosophy, and, while intending to remain closely tied to Platonism (at least in its Augustinian form), he put forward a rather different vision of the history of philosophy. The *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium*, written between 1502 and 1514 and published at Mirandola in 1520, confronted the representatives of humanist culture and the religious circles influenced by Platonism with a picture of pagan philosophy which drew support from the scepticism of Sextus Empiricus to disparage the efforts of both Aristotelian and other Greek philosophers to attain to the truth. This was the first Renaissance account of philosophical historiography to be inspired by the methods and enquiry of late-antique scepticism. In contrast to previous attempts to use sceptical ideas in the appraisal and presentation of the history of philosophy, the *Examen* aimed at completeness and a radical re-thinking of the whole problem.

During the course of the fifteenth century there had been no lack of erudite and scholarly books ridiculing and criticizing the multiplicity of philosophical schools and the restless agitation with which philosophers vainly sought to clarify the greatest questions of ethics and metaphysics. One of these books was the short, satirical *Momus* by Alberti (1443; publ. Rome, 1520) in which the opinions of the philosophers were examined, with humorous levity, supposedly during an imaginary journey made by Jove among men. Two works which dealt with questions of ethics and history together, by Filippo Beroaldo the Elder, must also be mentioned: the *Declamatio philosophi, medici, oratoris de excellentia disceptantium* and the *Libellus quo septem sapientium sapientiae discutuntur* (Bologna, 1497), in which the vanity of the philosopher is contrasted with the only standpoint which has true validity for the human condition: *Nosce te ipsum* (Know yourself).

Writings such as these were the product of a humanist environment, but sought to reorganize the task of reconstructing ancient thought by discouraging the rise of a new kind of scholasticism which, far from being an authentic cultivation of the soul, was in danger of becoming an almost

reverential cult of the opinions of the philosophers. The scholars behind this movement employed the same sources and methods as the historians in order to correct a tendency which appeared to them to represent a distortion of the innovatory endeavour and achievement of the humanist movement. They did not, however, contest the idea of the unity of philosophical thought or the uninterruptedness of the philosophical tradition. Their intellectual production remained largely unconnected to the Platonic vision, but moved within the limits of the literary and civil culture of Florentine humanism. Nor did it attempt to confront the problem of the agreement of pagan philosophy with Christian Revelation, being concerned, rather, to establish an anthropology grounded not so much in theology as in art and the inner moral life. The use made of scepticism was thus modest and relatively limited, being confined in general to a review of the lack of agreement, or divergence (*discordia*), among the opinions of the philosophers. The lack of a precise knowledge of Sextus Empiricus made the proper historiographical application of the sceptical perspective impossible, and reduced it to the status of a tool for the breaking down, rather than the building up, of ideas (*pars destruens*).

Gianfrancesco Pico was certainly not ignorant of the works of Alberti and Beroaldo. On the contrary, he knew and approved the accusations they had made against the philosophical opinions of antiquity, and he himself engaged critically with the evolution of ancient philosophy at a radical level in order to demonstrate the incompatibility of doctrines conceived before the advent of the Christian revelation, or outside the Jewish tradition, with those of Christian teaching, nourished by the Scriptures. In place of continuous development, Gianfrancesco posited a radical break between the uncertainty and error of pagan ideas and the true doctrines professed by Christian thinkers, illuminated by faith. Before the advent of Christ, not even the wise men and philosophers of pagan antiquity had been inspired by Revelation, which had provided unshakable certainty only for Christ's followers, the early Church Fathers, and certain learned Scholastics who had been able to develop a true *scientia*, that is, 'divine knowledge' or 'divine philosophy'. In his *Examen* (Bk. 1, ch. 2), commenting on his uncle's grandiose project of establishing the agreement between Plato and Aristotle as a sign of the unity of ancient thought, Gianfrancesco declares his own intention to be completely different:

I, however, find it more consistent and useful to render the philosophers' opinions uncertain, than to reconcile them as my uncle wished. In this I prefer to follow those ancient theologians of our faith who thought it better to attack the heathen philosophers and demolish their doctrines, rather than philosophize on the basis of their doctrines, in the manner of certain persons who in later ages cultivated learning, though even among them there were some who

came close to those earlier writers (*Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium et veritatis christianae disciplinae*, in Gianfrancesco Pico, *Opera omnia* (Basle, 1573), II, p. 738).

According to Gianfrancesco, Christian philosophers (with Augustine at their head) had not in fact sought to assimilate pagan philosophy as if to make themselves its heirs: they had sought to vindicate the truth of divine revelation, and to extract from among the error of pagan thought those glimpses of it that were not due to the merit of the philosophers, but were the inheritance of a natural truth which they had obscured. This meant that the only way of pursuing the study of the history of philosophy lay in the critical terms of an analysis of the philosophers' errors and a fruitless journey towards a truth which could be only partially attained.

Gianfrancesco Pico held that the aim of the historical study of philosophy was to demonstrate the conditions of human philosophical thinking when deprived of the light of revelation, or claiming independence from it. This involved going back to the past in order to discover why the errors were made and why the philosophers had become divided. Thus historical research should dwell upon philosophical environments, the character and personality of the different philosophical thinkers, the pedagogical organization of learning, the techniques and disciplines practised within the various schools which drew philosophers to one particular sect, and the various distortions of ideas met with by commentators. Gianfrancesco wrote:

For although there is, and is thought to be, only one truth, nevertheless there are many ways that antiquity took to pursue it, and although a diversity of opinions sprang thence, they called them by the names of knowledge and wisdom and learning — honourable names if they had accomplished what they hoped and there had not been so many wars among them that lasted for so many centuries. They would all have had the same opinion, and would not, lit by an excessive fire of self-love, have contended with total obstinacy that what they said was true and ought to be thought true; they would not have turned those who came to them to learn the truth into teachers of pernicious error, all the more impeded from attaining sound mind by their custom of confirming their masters' tenets with an oath. O wretchedness surely unparalleled, that a free man's mind, created for unhindered activity in contemplating truth, not content with the heavens or any created thing, should be held in the workhouse of one opinion, as if bound with manacles and shackles. But seeing that the root of this vanity had put down, in the minds and teaching of those who were said to profess wisdom among the Gentiles, a threefold fibril as it were, by which not only was it fed, but [enabled to] put forth a trunk and branches and leaves, to whose shade moreover a very great crowd came together; I therefore thought I should please

good minds by uprooting it if possible, and tearing off its fibrils with the keen edge of reasoning as if with hard iron, which I think can be done without difficulty if, in this very work we have in our hands, I show that the entire learning of the Gentiles totters with superstition, uncertainty, and falsehood (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 717–18).

Setting out with this aim, the *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium* made a broad and intelligent use of the works of Sextus Empiricus, which was little known to Western culture at that time.⁷ Book 1 of the *Examen* is entirely dedicated to a historical-critical analysis of the origins and development of ancient philosophy. It presents a proper history of thought as it progressed independently of the Jewish people (who were the repository of truth and alone maintained the cult of the one God). Gianfrancesco Pico wanted principally to show that mere human knowledge arose out of the confusion which resulted from the attempt to search for truth without a proper guide. In all these attempts, some individuals claimed to know truly the divine essence and called themselves theologians; others claimed to be able to fully embrace matters both human and divine — these called themselves wise men; others, more modestly, claimed only to be able to seek wisdom fruitfully and called themselves philosophers. Within this mixed group of people confusedly increasing the patrimony of wisdom no hierarchy or priority existed because all suffered from pride and error. Most ancient theology belonged not to the pagans but to the Hebrews, the only people to possess divine truth (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 723–4). The *prisca theologia* of Orpheus, Mercurius, Zoroaster, Homer, and Hesiod was no more than a series of vain attempts to focus on nature and the attributes (rather than the essence) of divinity. Greek wisdom was simply research into the nature of things carried out by a group of thinkers who probably numbered far more than seven but who had never achieved unity of doctrine in any form. Eventually the name of wise man came to be given to anyone who had a copious knowledge of things (that is, a *scientia*) but the use of the term in this way represented a distortion and a ‘taking in vain’ of its original meaning (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 725–6). For this reason Pythagoras preferred to be called a ‘philosopher’, affirming that the age of the search for wisdom had succeeded the age of the wise men. There was not, however, according to Gianfrancesco, a substantial difference between wisdom and philosophy. Both aimed at a complete knowledge of divine and lofty matters. The only difference lay in the fact that philosophy was held to be less important and less noble than wisdom (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 726–7).

The history of philosophy took its point of departure from Pythagoras but

⁷ As has been shown, with full documentation, by C. B. Schmitt, ‘The Recovery and Assimilation of Ancient Scepticism in the Renaissance’, *RCSF*, xxvii (1972), pp. 363–84. But see also the detailed remarks of W. Cavini, ‘Appunti sulla prima diffusione in occidente delle opere di Sesto Empirico’, *Medioevo*, iii (1977), pp. 1–20.

did not go only in the direction he had indicated. It also followed the road of physical observation which had been opened up by Thales: thus, from the very beginning, philosophy went in two directions. To Gianfrancesco the Ionic school appeared the most liberal and nuanced in its different leanings and tendencies (Anaximenes, Anaximander, Anaxagoras); the Italic school was more monolithic, more closely tied to observing the teaching and precepts of Pythagoras. But on closer scrutiny even this could be seen to contain within it internal dissensions which were perhaps less obvious, but equally numerous and divisive. One result of these disputes was a strong discordance over the interpretation of Pythagorean doctrine, over the division of knowledge, and over ethical-religious precepts. Another result was that Pythagoreanism also exerted influence in a number of different ways on magic and natural philosophy, so that the teaching of Pythagoras was even spread among the Druids (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 731-2). With the figure of Socrates and 'Socratic meditation' there came another kind of doctrine which 'humanized' philosophy. His chief disciples were Xenophon and Plato. They were followed by many others, who between them gave rise to many sects: according to Gianfrancesco the followers of Socrates included not only the Cyrenaics, Cynics, and Megarians, but also the Stoics, who had a strong propensity towards logic as well as an interest in ethics (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 732-4).

After Socrates, philosophical sects had proliferated and their history became correspondingly complex. Given this state of affairs, Gianfrancesco thought that it was possible to trace various groupings of sects through various classifications, whether based on the particular line of derivation of one of the schools, on their geographical locations, on the predominant interest of one or other aspect of their investigation, or on the manner and purpose of their way of doing philosophy. Of these criteria he preferred studying the derivation of the schools because it best revealed the fragmentation to which the thought and doctrines of the great philosophers were subject. Plato, for example, was in ethics a Socratic but he also followed Heraclitus and Pythagoras. As many as nine sects, both Academies and Platonists, claimed their origin and line of descent from him: the first (Xenocrates), the middle (Arcesilaus), the new (Carneades and Clitomachus), the fourth (Philo and Carmides), the fifth (Antiochus), the Egyptian (Ammonius), the Roman (Plotinus), the Lycian (Proclus), and the Syriac (Iamblichus). Aristotle's school also had a disturbed history; after Theophrastus and Neleus its progress came to a halt, only to be continued by Alexander of Aphrodisias with Themistius and Simplicius among its followers (*Examen vanitatis*, pp. 735-6).

All the sects were tenaciously opposed by the Sceptics, foremost among them Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus. This latter tendency revealed a *facultas*, or mode, of thought which was "not new, but old . . . not Roman, but Greek,

not extinguished once it had begun, but long-lasting". According to Gianfrancesco it is one thing to disagree with philosophical opinions and refute them conscientiously, quite another to behave like the eclectics (*electores*) who selected their ideas here and there among the sects, like bees sucking nectar to make honey, using the doctrines of other schools to construct their own system (*Examen vanitatis*, p. 737). Of all ancient philosophy the Sceptics' attitude appears to be the most remarkable. In comparison to them, the 'eclectic' sect founded by Potamon represents a miserable attempt to exploit philosophy in all its contradictoriness and vanity. The Sceptics' words and ideas are authentic, they are the only ones to reveal the dogmatic, arrogant character of Greek and Roman philosophical sects. Every philosophy, says Gianfrancesco, claims to be true and exists by denigrating others: "Plato either mocks or rebuts those who wrote before him, the Peripatetics do the same to Plato, the Stoics to them, others to the Stoics, the Epicureans to yet others, others to the Epicureans, the Sceptics to everyone". The Sceptics deny in a radical way that any one sect can possess and divulge the truth. No sect or doctrine can possess even a small portion of truth: philosophical sects, whether singly or collectively, have no power either to put forward an authentic vision or to contribute towards attaining one. In the overall evaluation of ancient thought, the critical approach of Scepticism surpasses both the vision proposed by Varro and Cicero of a choice of the best doctrines from the various sects, and even Giovanni Pico's idea of an agreement (*concordia*) between Plato and Aristotle (*Examen vanitatis*, p. 738).

Scepticism emphasizes the futility of philosophical research, though it may be useful in following philosophers' arguments or in examining, as Sextus Empiricus had done, the actual reasoning processes which led to error, dissent, and confusion. Gianfrancesco does this in the remaining chapters of Book I of the *Examen vanitatis*. He investigates disagreements over the division of philosophy (ch. 3), the possibility of making statements concerning the truth (chs. 4, 5), and the ability of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic to serve as instruments in the attainment of truth (ch. 6). He examines philosophers' opinions regarding mathematics, metaphysics, natural and moral philosophy (chs. 7, 8), illustrates their dissension over the first principle of reality (ch. 9), over causes and natural principles (ch. 10), over the construction and end of the world (ch. 11), and over its constituent parts (ch. 12). He dwells on ancient philosophers' conceptions of man (ch. 13) and of the human soul (ch. 14), as well as their disagreements concerning the functions of the soul (ch. 15). He discusses the opinions of philosophers and physicians on the constitution, affections, and properties of the human body (ch. 16); and he dwells on the disagreements which arose over the idea of happiness and the *summum bonum* (ch. 17), the division of good and bad (ch. 18), and virtue and law (ch. 19). The conclusion is clear-cut:

It becomes perfectly clear that all the philosophy of the Gentiles is

uncertain, for since there is variety in the ways of philosophizing, in the sects of philosophizers, and in the tenets of those philosophers who are reckoned the most important, who do not agree either on the division of philosophy or on philosophy itself after division, and (which is far worse) since they wrangle and fight among themselves on, if not everything, then certainly the first and most important things and those more worth knowing, and still no way of ending the fight can be found, what else remains to save the Gentiles' learning itself from being judged vain and utterly uncertain? (*Examen vanitatis*, p. 812).

The vanity and uncertainty of pagan philosophizing make it impossible for a Christian to follow the teachings of ancient thought, especially when these have been shown by Scepticism to lack a clear criterion of judgement. In Book II of the *Examen* Gianfrancesco demonstrates, author by author, a panorama of the criteria adopted by ancient philosophers, and takes care to mention, at the end, the 'topics' (*loci*) of scepticism, as found in Sextus Empiricus. Not content with this, he pursues his investigation by examining, in Book III, the Sceptical critique of the liberal arts, declaring these too to be uncertain and vain. The last three books of the *Examen*, which are the most well-known to modern critics, demonstrate that Aristotle's philosophy, notwithstanding its success in the West even among Christian scholastics, cannot be used as a guide to natural truth as the prelude to supernatural truth. The analysis of Aristotle is very thorough. It begins by casting doubt on the authenticity of several Aristotelian works and on the reliability of others, as well as on the seriousness of some of his commentators (Book IV). It ends by refuting Aristotle's methodology and its epistemological presuppositions (Book V), and by making a thorough critique of Aristotelian pronouncements on physics, metaphysics, theology, and ethics (Book VI). The invitation to simple faith, to the study of the Scriptures and holy authors, comes as a natural conclusion to the attack on Aristotelian philosophy. Reaffirming the ideas contained in his youthful work entitled *De studio divinae et humanae philosophiae* of 1496 (reissued, significantly, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in a scrupulously corrected edition by Budde: Halle, 1702). Gianfrancesco Pico accepted 'human philosophy' as a humble and totally inadequate preparation for the study of revealed doctrine, which was the real substance of the true 'philosophy'. However, this type of study was not 'research into', but 'possession of' the truth. It did not proceed from an ancient revelation but from the workings of divine action as embodied in sacred texts, where it should be studied attentively and deeply. It was not possible to write the history of such a 'divine science'. It was feasible at most to illustrate the various positions of the theologians and Church Fathers who, as Gianfrancesco emphasizes, had defended revelation against the explicit and implicit attacks of pagan philosophers. The relationship between

the history of non-Christian philosophers and the activities of Christian philosophers lies in the negation of human philosophy propounded by the latter and their vindication of the glimmers of truth offered by the former. It was therefore possible to write the history only of 'error' and 'research', as found in pagan or human philosophy. This none the less proved highly interesting to Gianfrancesco Pico, who devoted a great deal of space to such historical exposition and refutation.

The same road was followed by Giovanni Battista Crispo (Crispus: d. 1595) the theologian, philosopher, and poet from Gallipoli, who translated the indications and method of the *Examen vanitatis* into a systematic historical work, entitled *De Ethnicis Philosophis caute legendis* (Rome, 1594). This was a review of the error of pagan thought, conducted by means of disputes aimed at putting Christian philosophers on their guard (with appropriate admonitions, or *cautiones*) so that they should not compromise the integrity of the truth they possessed. The author did not complete his work, publishing only a *Quinarius primus* (in three parts, subdivided into books): the second and third *quinarius*, according to Heumann (II, pp. 947-8) and Nicéron (xxvii, p. 270), remained in manuscript form among the papers of the Bishop of Benevento, Alessandro di Sangro. The first *quinarius*, devoted to an examination of Plato's thought (the work possesses a second title on a second frontispiece: *De Platone caute legendo. Disputationum libri XXIII in quibus triplex rationalis animi status ex propriis Platonis principiis corrigitur, et Catholicae Ecclesiae sanctionibus expurgator*), is an attempt to turn historical enquiry into an instrument of apologetic advocacy: it warns against the Counter-Reformation tendency to purge pagan authors where they contradict faith. It is significant that Possevino, in his *Apparatus sacer*, (Cologne, 1608, Vol. I, p. 821), should have appreciated the whole tenor and approach of the work, especially the many references to ancient thought as the fount of heresy.

Crispo presents Platonic thought and the Platonic tradition in the vast, wide-ranging context of all the books, debates, and commentaries which had accompanied it, especially those concerning the problem of the soul. From the Church Fathers to the *platonici recentiores*, he examines a whole section of the history of philosophy and its relationship to the history of the Church and its dogma. At the beginning of the volume there is a catalogue of those philosophers who are to be read with caution; after the preface there is an 'Index haeticorum atque haeresum, quorum origo . . . detegitur, atque cavetur' and an 'Index ecclesiasticorum dogmatum, quibus . . . confutatas haereses, occurritur'. Each book is preceded by a plan in which pagan philosophers, Christian theologians, and heretics are placed in relationship to each other. The chapters give ample space to the Fathers and learned scholastics who had studied or followed Plato, reproducing fragments and summaries of entire volumes and commenting widely on them. In presenting the

Platonic tradition in the 'Praefatio' (pp. [2-3]), he speaks of "ranks" of Platonists as if they were an army to be engaged in combat, and cites Zoroaster, Hermes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Proclus, and Plotinus. Immediately afterwards he refers to the Christians: Clement, Origen, Philo (whom he considers to be a Church Father), Justin, Eusebius, Theodoret, Augustine, and other Latin and Greek Fathers. All these names contribute to his purpose, which is to make a full review and reappraisal of ancient Platonic philosophy, with the aim of establishing truth (*de veritate*) and defending it (*pro veritate*: 'Praefatio', p. [1]). On the crucial subject of the soul, Crispo examines the doctrine propounded by each Platonist in order to ascertain its true significance, the dangers inherent or latent in it, and its degree of error.

While Gianfrancesco Pico and Patrizi undertook a historical analytical study of Aristotle, Crispo did the same with Plato. Imposing equivalent methodological requirements, he proposed a radical critique of Platonic philosophy with the aim of demonstrating its incompatibility with Christian philosophy. What had been done for Aristotle in the *Examen vanitatis* and *Discussiones peripateticae*, would now be done for Plato in a work entitled *De ethnicis philosophis*: the possibility cannot be excluded that Crispo intended to reveal Patrizi's reformist commitment as groundless, since it was based on an author and a tradition wholly extraneous to the Christian Revelation. In various parts of the *De Platone caute legendo* we find attacks on those who had held Plato to be almost a Christian philosopher and the founder of a whole development of philosophical schools. Thus Crispo attacks Bessarion for censuring the anti-Platonist George of Trebizond (pp. 41-3, 379); he also attacks Cabbalist philosophers (*theologi secretiore*s: pp. 44-9). Exalting Pythagoras' vision of the soul, he refers to Ficino and Bessarion as "deificatores Platonis" (p. 428); he claims that Ficino's interpretation of the Platonic conception of the soul often contradicts Plato and is frequently untenable (p. 307); he also criticizes the *De perenni philosophia* and its concordist intentions regarding the Platonic tradition (pp. 39-40).

Crispo is the Counter-Reformation philosopher who most closely follows Gianfrancesco Pico's teaching. He combines the idea that the history of philosophy is a succession of errors and wrong turnings with an exalted praise of revealed doctrine, as interpreted and elaborated by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Gianfrancesco was cautious on the subject of patristic Platonism and rejected Aristotle: Crispo repudiated both Plato and Aristotle, accepting from their philosophy only what was in harmony with the teachings of the Church. Basically this was concordism in reverse: he evaluated the two greatest of the ancient philosophers in order to show that pagan philosophy as a whole could not be considered valid. In *De Platone* (p. 22) Crispo writes of having followed both Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines in order to study their philosophy carefully and objectively.

Moreover, at the end of the 'Praefatio' (p. [6]) he refers to his critics, either Augustinian and Platonic (Father Evangelista of Padua, an Augustinian), or Thomist (Francisco Suárez, then lecturing in Naples). The richness of the position represented by Gianfrancesco Pico is here replaced by a standpoint which more often focuses on the orthodoxy of the philosophical positions it examines than on revealing the errors of pagan thought on the basis of the radical critical and exegetical demands of scepticism. Viewed in this light, Pico's contribution seems far more trenchant and clear-sighted in its criticism, and, above all, more deeply original. In contrast to Gianfrancesco Pico, Crispo is led astray by a confessional anxiety and does not grasp the fact that the history of ancient philosophy, as it emerges from the *Examen vanitatis*, is the result of a happy meeting between a Christian soul deeply committed to reform, and a telling rigour of philosophical and philological criticism.

Gianfrancesco Pico combines the fideism taught by Savonarola with Sextus Empiricus' systematic scepticism, his purpose being to offer a testimony to the truth of religion.⁸ In fulfilling this exaltation of faith, Gianfrancesco still operates as a historian of philosophy, and his use of Sextus Empiricus enriches the historical problem. In place of philosophers' *placita* we find doctrines presented and analyzed organically, theories and attempts expounded with a real sense of their dynamism. Sextus Empiricus has become a precious source because it was he who suggested a way of analyzing the philosophy of the past which was both critical and historical.

Gianfrancesco Pico claims to have read in detail all ten books of the *Adversus mathematicos* (*Examen vanitatis*, p. 737), and considers that the careful analysis of such works of scepticism represents both a reconstruction of ancient thought and the placing of it in its proper light as a series of mistaken and erroneous attempts. This position goes beyond that of a historiography founded simply on the idea of a presumed unity of philosophical development, because it introduces the notions of concreteness and individuality. But nor is it a return to the tradition of detailed biography, with its attention to small particulars; for the history of each sect and each philosopher's thought is analyzed doctrinally and related, in each case, to the human conditions under which the research was conducted.

The sceptical perspective enjoyed considerable success during the sixteenth century. When applied to historiography it stimulated detailed research and provoked impatience with the Platonic interpretation of

⁸ Cavini (*Appunti sulla prima diffusione*, pp. 16-20) has pointed out that fideism and scepticism were already closely linked in Savonarola's circle. The works of Sextus Empiricus were known to Savonarola who recommended them as writings apt to stimulate conscious awareness of the vanity of all purely human endeavour in the search for truth. Cf. D. Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence: Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1970), p. 243 — which draws on Gianfrancesco's evidence for Savonarola's *Life* — and D. P. Walker, 'Savonarola and the Ancient Theology', in *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1972), pp. 58-62.

the history of philosophy. There were no true successors to Book I of the *Examen vanitatis*. Not even Cornelius Agrippa's *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium* (Antwerp, 1530), with its minuteness of detail (inspired partly by Gianfrancesco Pico), attempts a truly historical analysis of the various philosophical sects. Agrippa concludes in this book "that the sciences and the arts are nothing but traditions of men, received by us out of good-hearted credulity towards them, and that they all consist entirely of doubtful matters and opinions, by specious proofs (*per apparentes demonstrationes*); and that they are all not so much uncertain as fallacious and even at the same time impious" (Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum*, n.p., 1542, fol. 170^v). The work attributes to the examination of the past the sole task of making us conscious of the impiety of whatever has been created or thought by the inventiveness of human wits when not truly inspired. He seeks as a matter of principle to avoid all generalizations, whether suggested by the work of Diogenes Laertius or by the philosophical vision of the Platonists. And in his role as philological critic he seeks to reconstruct the path of philosophy and study each individual philosopher without prejudice.

The *Examen vanitatis* had opened the way for an enquiry which could take account of the study of ancient authors in a way that was distinct both from any apologia for their humanity and from the investigation of their systems merely as contributions to the growth of one tradition or another. In the *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum* Agrippa confirms that ancient wisdom is not a single unified source and puts forward the idea of a critical enquiry into the ways in which philosophy developed in antiquity, a proposal which is motivated by mystical-religious demands.

This complex state of mind is expressed for us by Montaigne, who in the *Apologie de Raymond Sebonde*, while using Sextus Empiricus' arguments against the dogmatists, reminds us of the necessity of philosophical historiography in order to reconstruct the real dimensions, in time and space, of the act of philosophizing. His starting-point is a confrontation between the position of the Academicians (Arcesilaus) and that of the followers of Pyrrho (Sextus Empiricus) concerning the supreme good. The former affirm that good is 'the upright, inflexible state of justice'; the latter that it is 'immobility of justice', intending this in a negative sense. These two opinions represented, in a sense, the culmination of the discussion on the supreme good, which had evolved through a long series of propositions — possibly the 288 opinions enumerated by Varro. Montaigne warns of the need for clarity in the face of all this complexity and multiplicity: 'untroubled calm' (*ataraxia*) needs the comfort of an orderly presentation of the opinions of the philosophers.

He explains as follows:

How greatly I desire that, while I still live, some other [mind], or

Justus Lipsius [himself], the most learned man now left to us, endowed with a mind of great discernment and good judgement, a truly kindred spirit to my Turnebus, should have the will, the good health, and the necessary leisure to collect into a single comprehensive work, grouped together according to a proper system of division and classification, with as much frankness and diligence as we can bring to the task, the opinions of ancient philosophy regarding our being and our customs and habits, the disagreements among them, the reputation and succession of the different factions, the way in which the lives of the various authors and *sectatores* furnish memorable incidents which show in exemplary fashion the application of their precepts. How useful such an estimable work would be!⁹

The whole sceptical contribution to philosophical historiography is contained in this text. The controversies between the sects which had been revealed by the humanists and, above all, during the rebirth of the ancient moral philosophies (to which Gianfrancesco Pico contributed the knowledge of Sextus Empiricus' thought), required the adoption of a different perspective by which to approach the history of thought in its entirety. An organic critical-historical study of ancient philosophies was needed: only thus could every opinion be seen in its every contour, correctly arranged within its context.

Montaigne greatly preferred the approach based on historical enquiry to the concordist one: clarity and discernment were required ("un esprit très-poly et judicieux"). A serious work on the philosophy of the past required a scholar of renown and proven ability: he suggested Justus Lipsius, the historian and philologist who was to carry on the task of making a full historical study both of the Stoic sect and of the eclectic view. Montaigne had no doubts about the seriousness of the commitment and the critical ability needed to perform this demanding task: only a humanist scholar who was both a historian and a philosopher would be able to complete the definitive work of gathering together all the voices from philosophy's past. The reference to Turnebus (1512–1565) was by no means fortuitous: the latter had studied ancient philosophy in depth, in his books on Cicero and Varro, in his Greek translations, and above all in the *Adversaria* (Paris: Vols. 1–2, 1564–5; Vol. 3, 1573; 30 books in all). The history of philosophy that was required by the times was not a simple sketch, outline or historical plan; nor was it a historical-polemical work like the *Examen vanitatis* (which

⁹ 'Combien je désire que, pendant que je vis, ou quelque autre, ou Justus Lipsius, le plus sçavant homme qui nous reste, d'un esprit très-poly et judicieux, vraiment germain à mon Turnebus, eust et la volonté, et la santé, et assez de repos pour ramasser en un registre, selon leurs divisions et leurs classes, sincèrement et curieusement, autant que nous y pouvons voir, les opinions de l'ancienne philosophie sur le subject de nostre estre et de noz meurs, leurs controverses, le credit et suite des pars, l'application de la vie des autheurs et sectateurs à leurs precepts ès accidens memorables et exemplaires. Le bel ouvrage et utile que ce seroit!' (Montaigne, *Essais*, Bk. 11, ch. 12, ed. M. Rat (Paris, 1962), Vol. 1, p. 650).

Montaigne probably knew even though he did not use it in the *Essais*.¹⁰ Rather, it was a scientifically rigorous work (*registre*), in which philosophical thought would be laid out according to a set of possible historical divisions, and consideration given to certain subject-areas. These would have to include: doctrines relating to physics, metaphysics, and moral philosophy; the disagreements that had arisen between the different schools concerning the key philosophical themes; and the history of the schools (*suite des pars*), understood in a concrete sense: that is, by observing whether, in their own lives, philosophers lived up to their teachings at crucial moments.¹¹

Montaigne spoke of "volonté", "santé", and "repos" — that is, having the motivation, the good health, and the leisure to accomplish a chosen task — as the physical and psychological conditions necessary for studying the history of philosophy: a complete history could not be achieved quickly or without effort. Clearly Montaigne foresaw a general history of philosophy which would combine a broad range of material with a critical presentation. Humanist erudition and critical-sceptical attitudes would finally be joined together in order to form a complete picture of philosophy. This was not quite an encyclopaedic perspective, but it did represent the start of a new and different approach. Sketches, biographies, and studies of the speculative traditions would soon give way to a type of historical work which could properly be called critical. Sixteenth-century scepticism had made its contribution to such a critical approach by focusing on historical analysis as a means of establishing the different stages or phases of philosophical thought.

¹⁰ Two different points of view have been expressed on this question: F. Strowski (*Montaigne* (Paris, 1906), pp. 125–30) stated that the *Examen* was known to Montaigne and used extensively by him in the *Apologie de Raymond Sebonde*. P. Villey (*Les sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, Vol. II (Paris, 1908), p. 166), stated that Montaigne did not make direct use of the *Examen* — even though he did not deny the possibility that he knew it and had even read it. Recent criticism has maintained that Montaigne's scepticism was based on a direct knowledge of Sextus Empiricus and the arguments contained in the *De vanitate* by Cornelius Agrippa (who in his turn partly followed Sextus and partly Gianfrancesco Pico). Cf. C. B. Schmitt, *Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola and his Critique of Aristotle* (The Hague, 1967), pp. 160–61, 239–42.

¹¹ In the *Essais*, Bk. II, ch. 12, Montaigne stated that he generally preferred in any historical work the intellectual or philosophical aspect: to write in this way it was necessary to combine the 'biographical' demand as represented by Plutarch with the 'doxographic' represented by Diogenes Laertius, deepening the scope and range of Diogenes' speculative approach and extending the limits of its research. 'Or ceux qui écrivent les vies, d'autant qu'ils s'amusement plus aux conseils qu'aux événements, plus à ce qui part du dedans qu'à ce qui arrive au dehors, ceux là me sont plus propres. Voilà pourquoi, en toutes sortes, c'est mon homme que Plutarque. Je suis bien marry que nous n'ayons une douzaine de Laertius, ou qu'il ne soit plus entendu ou plus entendu. Car je ne considère pas moins curieusement la fortune et la vie de ces grands precepteurs du monde, que la diversité de leurs dogmes et fantasies' (*Essais*, Vol. I, pp. 459–60). For Montaigne's abiding interest in Diogenes's *Lives of the Philosophers*, cf. P. Villey, *Les sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, Vol. I (Paris, 1908), pp. 115–17. For his interest in Plutarch, as well as Villey, Vol. I, pp. 198–200, see G. Norton, *Le Plutarque de Montaigne: Selections from Amyot's Translation of Plutarch Arranged to Illustrate Montaigne's Essays* (Boston and New York, 1906) and R. Aulotte, *Amyot et Plutarque: La tradition des Moralia au XVI siècle* (Geneva, 1965).

5. THE REFORMATION PERIOD : HISTORICAL CONTROVERSY AND INTEREST IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

The philological-humanistic, Platonic-concordistic, and sceptical tendencies shared between them in unequal but significant measure the task of promoting the birth of philosophical historiography. It could be said that philological interest in the history of philosophy existed in an almost pure state only among Italian humanists of the early fifteenth century, whereas this philological component was later merged into the Platonic-concordistic movement and into Scepticism. Philological criticism became the necessary instrument for sustaining research on the unity of ancient thought and on the agreement between philosophical sects, or on the 'experiments' of the philosophers. Put more briefly, it can be said that the tendency which led the way towards a new historicizing method of examining ancient philosophers ended by becoming part of that wider group of tendencies which actively brought about an increase in the study of the history of philosophy. Philological humanism, moreover, provided an indispensable support to historical thinking during the Protestant Reformation. Scholars inspired by Lutheranism and engaged in anti-Papal, anti-Scholastic polemic used historical-humanistic philosophy in much the same way as scholars inspired by Platonism or Scepticism. Within the current of Reformation thought in Germany (as in France, England or the Low Countries), humanism was combined with a renewed interest in a theological vision of history. By comparison with Italian humanism, European humanists had already become more interested in a general conception of history derived from the Latin Fathers (Augustine, Lactantius). Vives, for example, had prepared a carefully corrected and annotated edition of the *De civitate Dei*. Now, both moderate and radical reformists showed a decisive return to a providentialist vision and to a complete historical plan of human events from the time of Adam to the universal Empire.

Hence, philosophical historiography was also influenced by the historical practice of Protestant writers (contrary to the opinion of Braun, p. 55): the attention given to the more general history of humanity from Adam to Luther was also given to the study of antiquity and the development of philosophy after the classical age. The picture of philosophy grew larger: not only ancient pagan philosophy and oriental and classical civilizations but also medieval philosophical thought became the object of careful evaluation and historical consideration. In the case of the Florentine Platonists and scholars of the *prisca theologia* this broadening of the historical approach to philosophy tended towards the involvement of all the events of philosophy within an overall providential design. Most ancient wisdom, barbarian, classical, and patristic philosophy, Christian heresy, and Scholasticism were no longer

seen simply as the development of a tradition or multiplicity of traditions, but as aspects of the action of divine providence, which from time to time brought forth philosophies and sects destined to bring truth or error, unity or division, among men.

The attention of the theologians and philosophers of the Protestant Reform became increasingly focused on pagan philosophy's contribution to the development of Christian theological doctrines. Throughout the long history of the church, the roots of heresy could be found in Greek philosophical sects or in barbarian and oriental (that is, non-Greco-Roman) philosophies. Thus it was the duty of theologians, both Lutherans and Calvinists, to study the history of philosophy in order to find useful elements with which to understand and refute the rebirth of heresy. The figure of Adam Tribbechow, half-way through the seventeenth century, is emblematic of this prevailing attitude. Ancient doctrines were studied with the double aim of finding out their potential use to the heretics, and of understanding the arguments used in antiquity to refute those theories which the heretics had appropriated. In this way philosophical thought was studied historically in the German Protestant universities from the end of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century, a practice which gradually changed into the more formal academic usage of employing historical-philosophical arguments didactically. This eventually flowed out into the tradition of the historical 'dissertation' so frequently employed by Jakob Thomasius.

In Germany the refutation of heresy was closely linked to the struggle against the Papacy. In this area, too, it was usual to have recourse to the history of philosophy, especially medieval philosophy. In so doing a periodization of the history of philosophy was outlined that was to become, and remain, characteristic for the following two centuries: the scholastic age was situated between the decadence of early patristic philosophy and the Reformation. The conscious awareness of the existence of a long period of history during which the organization of knowledge within the ambit of philosophical studies was geared towards the rationalization of theology and the subordination of intellectual research to the intentions and purposes of the Roman Papacy (through the collected *Sententiae* and *Canonî*) was given a high profile through the activity of Protestant publicists, guided by Luther himself, who saw Aristotelian Scholasticism as an intrusion of a perverse rationalism into the domain of faith. Both the anti-Scholasticism of the Italian and European humanists (which was aimed only at the 'subtleties' and 'sophistry' of late Scholasticism) and the anti-scholastic position adopted by the Sceptics (which exalted the great Scholastic doctors while condemning the naturalistic use of Aristotle's thought) were radically modified. Scholasticism was condemned, in its entirety, as emanating from a corrupt Church.

Those who made particular contributions towards this change of judgement included humanists such as Beatus Rhenanus (see the *Admonitio* to the reader in his edition of Tertullian's work: Basle, 1521), Johannes Reuchlin (in various phases of his polemic against the Dominicans concerning Hebrew philosophy), and even Lorenzo Valla, in several of the positions and viewpoints he adopted in his *De libero arbitrio*. Discussing the relationship between genuine faith and theology, these authors attributed the birth of theology, as a system of enquiry into truths which transcend reason, to the pernicious influence of philosophical heresies and to vain curiosity. They also condemned the Papacy's use of theology to corrupt any sense of the autonomous development of faith: it was this which had given rise to the idea of Scholasticism as a philosophical-theological movement especially created to obscure genuine truth with sophistry, captious assertions, and useless questions, so that the perverse power of the Papacy might triumph.

Among all these writings, the assertions made by the authors of the *Centuria* from Magdeburg must suffice to give an idea of this kind of criticism. The effective predominance of Scholasticism over minds, mentalities, and intellectual research really began with the collection of Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*, "which, though they tried to settle and cut short (*decidere atque amputare*) thorny and subtle questions, rather caused them to grow; as the history of subsequent centuries bears witness" (*Historia ecclesiastica integram Ecclesiae Christianae conditionem, inde a Christo ex Virgine nato, juxta saeculorum seriem exponens* (Basle, 1624), Vol. III: 'Centuria XII', p. 2). It culminated in the thirteenth century: "For their disputes brought everything into doubt, and indeed into public debate, in the manner of Academics and Sceptics; and that the darkness might be greater, the divine light was not only flecked with Scholastic clouds (*nebulis Scholasticis . . . aspersa*) but completely obscured" (*Historia ecclesiastica*, Vol. III: 'Centuria XIII', p. 2).

The scholastic period was seen as an independent phase, having its own moment of autonomy, within the history of the Church and the history of philosophy. From being summarily condemned, it progressed to being studied by Protestant historians for its chronological divisions and speculative characteristics. Philosophical historiography thereby acquired a different periodization. Christian philosophy was no longer seen as a block which it was not necessary to examine historically but as an articulate expression of attitudes and positions whose succession marked a clear decadence of faith, prevalence of error, and ecclesiastical tyranny. It was possible to envisage writing the history of philosophical and theological Christian thought precisely because genuine Christian doctrine was destined to become corrupted, and truth destined to cohabit, or be mingled with error. Partly sharing the sceptical vision of Gianfrancesco Pico, Protestant historians maintained that the source of error lay in believing in the autonomous capacity of reason, that is in 'human philosophy', a belief which had been of advantage to the

Church, and had been the cause of Scholasticism. Therefore, error must be defeated by restoring genuine faith and rebelling against a corrupt Church. This marked the beginning of a new era in the history of thought, that of the Reformation, in which the vanity of the act of philosophizing was recognized and condemned, and the liberty of the individual believer confirmed. The Protestant vision linked ancient thought to Christian thought in order to point to the dangerous infiltration of error into a particular historical era. Pagan philosophy had not ended with the advent of the light of the Christian Revelation, but had continued to exist and had begun to ensnare Christian thought and culture. It was necessary to identify and expose the various ways in which it had insinuated itself into philosophical and theological research in order to combat it. From this stemmed the usefulness, from the viewpoint of Protestant intellectual culture, of studying Scholasticism and the history of philosophy in general.

An interesting historical sketch of scholastic thought can be found in the continuation of the *Chronicon Carionis*, written by the reformer Kaspar Peucer (Peucerius). Within the history of the Reformation he represents a critical humanist approach, preoccupied chiefly with the justification of a form of religion that was moderate, properly spiritual, and imbued with culture.¹² He found himself in opposition to the orthodox Lutheranism of such writers as Flacius Illyricus. As a faithful follower of Melancthon (one of whose daughters he married), Peucer applied in historiography the same equable spirit of tolerance and moderation as his teacher. An example of this can be found in his reasoned judgement of Scholasticism: he certainly found it to be full of errors and prevarications, but he discovered, too, a dense interweaving of political, ecclesiastical, and speculative factors. At this point, polemical controversy was replaced by historical study, governed and directed, it is true, by a providentialist vision (in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the *Chronicon Carionis* was the most widely accredited text on the theology of history), but taking scrupulous account both of the doctrinal values and of the cultural and political values of the scholastic movement. Peucer, while taking a keen interest in anti-Papal polemic and the theology of history, was also obliged to turn the history of Scholasticism into a warning to his contemporaries: having once avoided 'Papist' Scholasticism, they must not fall into Protestant Scholasticism — that is, a too-rigorous spirit of uncompromizing orthodoxy.

According to Peucer, medieval Scholasticism was actively anti-imperial in character and function. The Church sought to counter the secular authority of the Empire in two ways, through the *Canoni* and through the organization

¹² Among the works written by him on medicine, astrology, divination, theology, and history we should note an *Oratio de studiis veteris philosophiae et de successionem docentium inter tot mutationes imperiorum* (Wittenberg, 1557), which is notable for the striking degree of interest it shows for the study of the history of ancient philosophy, and for its formative value in education.

of higher studies. They countered the renascence of Roman law, as taught in the faculty of law, by means of Canon law, basing their authority on the theology which was taught in the schools they had created.

And since new law and new statutes required new advocates and defenders too, there quickly bestirred themselves two races of men, Canonists and Scholastics, of whom the former undertook the championing of hierarchy and Roman tyranny with more zeal than others defended the imperial power out of Scripture and Roman law; the latter devised new doctrines, in order to capture and ensnare men's minds with the bewitchment (*fascino*) of errors and superstitions, so that, bound by these nooses (*quibus . . . hi vincti*), they might remain obedient to the See of Rome.

Such an interpretation allowed Peucer to avoid making the sort of crude value-judgements and condemnations which are caused by a lack of historical awareness. He was able to relate such things as the beginnings of the disagreements, of sophistry, of rationalism, and even of the influence of Aristotle on the study of theology and philosophy, to a political design of the Church.

The clouding of faith and the establishment of a theology based on syllogism were not merely the effects of a slow corruption of truth caused by error. Rather, they were the consequence of an action of the Church aimed directly at the domination of individual conscience and at reducing (perhaps even eliminating) the reliance on a simple, independent source from which to study revealed truth.

The interpreters Thomas Aquinas and Scotus, having contended with each other in subtleties, so filled the church with questions, some fatuous (*ineptis*), some impious, some insoluble (*inextricabilis*), and at the same time so corrupted and defiled philosophy, that they imposed on more recent writers, William of Ockham and others, the necessity of disagreeing with them. Hence ensued remarkable conflicts (*mirabiles conflictus*), at length ended and removed by the light of reformed teaching (*lux doctrinae restitutae*) (*Chronicon Carionis* (Berne, 1601), p. 595).

According to Peucer, Scholasticism was divided into three stages: the first phase, from Lanfranc of Pavia (1020), Gratian, and Peter Lombard down to their first annotator, Alexander of Hales, lasted 200 years; the second, from Albertus Magnus to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, lasted 110 years; the third, from Durandus to Gabriel Biel, ended in 1517 with the onset of Luther's rebellion, and lasted about 187 years. In all, then, Scholasticism lasted nearly 500 (or, more exactly, 497) years: it was preceded in the history of the Church by an age which lasted from Pope Gregory the Great as far as 1020, when the slow decline in ecclesiastical customs began, as error started to infiltrate the purity and sincerity of the research carried on within the

Church. The periodization suggested by Peucer was taken up again in the *Commentarius triplex in Petri Lombardi librum primum Sententiarum*, a polemical work by the French Calvinist theologian Lambert Daneau (1530–1595), written and published at Geneva in 1580. In the *Prolegomeni* to his highly polemical commentary on Peter Lombard, Daneau spoke of “the origin, developments, and ages (*origo, progressionones et aetates*) of Scholastic theology”. In doing so he was clearly referring to Peucer’s ideas about Scholasticism, for he too set out to trace the outline of the different phases of its history by dividing it, as had been done for the ‘Academic sect’, into three periods, namely, the ‘ancient’, the ‘second’ or ‘middle’ period, and the ‘new’ (L. Daneau, *In Petri Lombardi . . . librum Primum Sententiarum . . . Commentarius* (Geneva, 1580), fol. 1r). As soon as he became aware of Daneau’s subdivisions, which represented an honourable tribute to his own historiographical theories, Peucer was quick to make explicit the assertions first put forward in the *Chronicon*. The historical view of the events of Scholasticism, “merely begun by me (*a me tantum inchoata*)”, he wrote, had been “arranged” (*digesta*) and “unravelling” (*detexta*) by Daneau. For this reason it was now necessary to clarify the threefold distinction “of the three schools and doctrines of the Scholastic doctors”. The result was a short text, dated 1588, entitled *Triplex aetas doctorum scholasticorum*, which remained unpublished until its recovery in modern times by Cantimori, who first produced an edition of it (cf. *Umanesimo e luteranesimo di fronte alla Scolastica: Caspar Peucer*, collected in *Umanesimo e religione nel Rinascimento* (Turin, 1975), pp. 109–11). In this work Peucer demonstrates acute powers of synthesis in interpreting medieval philosophy, something which appears quite new by comparison with other Protestant historians of the time. Scholasticism is here given a definitive historiographical profile and context, and a plan outlined for the historical study of its events. Peucer’s outline gives us a revealing indication of the way in which Scholastic thought placed too high a value on the writings of the Church Fathers — particularly those of Augustine, which were given equal status with Scripture (“[Scholasticism] erred in according their writings equal authority with Holy Scripture”). The patristic texts were then replaced with the philosophy of Aristotle (“This age, with detestable audacity and impudence, instead of Scripture and the doctrine of the Fathers brought into the Church the philosophy of Aristotle, in particular his ethics and metaphysics. His writings they everywhere put on a par with the Word of God”). In other words, this development led to the substitution for the direct study of the texts of Holy Scripture and the Church Fathers of a series of abstruse, useless, and absurd questions (*Triplex aetas doctorum scholasticorum*, in Cantimori, *Umanesimo e religione nel Rinascimento*, pp. 108–9).

According to Peucer, medieval philosophy should be considered not as a block, but through its evolution and development. The increasing corruption

of the sense of genuine faith advanced with an ever-increasing prevalence of vain logical exercises and the formal syllogistic *quaestio* over the direct study of the text of Scripture. The authors cited by Peucer in his historical outline, for example, are considered worthy of study for their contribution to philosophical research, whether negative or positive. Admittedly, Peucer does not always display impeccable critical acumen, and he even accepts the names of certain philosophers and theologians merely on the authority of Daneau (for example, the Sophist Eccius and the Parisian monk Genebrardus are quoted as followers of the third age of Scholasticism without its being made clear how this contributes to an understanding of the significance of their work). But he suggests several avenues of enquiry within the scope of the overall review contained in his outline. Even when he attributes Gioacchino da Fiore's *Evangelio eterno* to Cyril the Carmelite (*Triplex aetas doctorum scholasticorum*, p. 108), he seems to be aware of the importance of this book and that the problems surrounding it can best be resolved with the aid of historical-philosophical techniques of research. The errors and bitterness which inevitably resulted from polemical controversy none the less indicated fertile ground for future enquiry. Seventeenth-century scholars did not lose sight of the suggestions made by Peucer, if only as a reminder not to neglect the particular events of medieval philosophy, nor the underlying rhythm which articulated its progress. The picture of Scholastic philosophy, and the definition of the role of the Church as it began to establish itself and consolidate its position, were to provoke a spirit of close study and polemical controversy which was useful for the advancement of philosophical historiography. Tribbechow's *De doctoribus scholasticis* (see below, Ch. 4, sect. 2) was an important example of this.

Religious controversy between Protestants and Catholics encouraged the growth of historical research into philosophy and promoted a keen interest in establishing the exact succession of events. Religious conflict and humanist critical method were joined in the struggle towards greater knowledge of the philosophical past, a knowledge in which tradition, legend, and anecdote were to be rejected in favour of historically proven events and doctrines. In opposition to Peucer and the authors of the *Centuria* we find thinkers such as Baronius and, at a later stage, de Launoy and the Benedictine scholars, whose interest in medieval philosophy differed markedly from the concerns of the main exponents of the second Scholasticism: that is, a specifically historical interest. In the second half of the sixteenth century, when the organization of philosophical historiography was being constructed on the basis of the historiography of sects, those currents of thought that had variously inspired it, namely humanism, Platonism, Scepticism, and the historical thought of the Reformation, tended to overlap in extending the area of research and increasing the quantity of information to be extracted from the available historical material, an activity which went far beyond the

faithful reconstruction of sectarian thought. We stand here at the threshold of an era, that of the true *historia philosophica*.

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SECTION TWO

THE 'HISTORIA PHILOSOPHICA' IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

ILARIO TOLOMIO

PREFATORY REMARKS

With the transition from the first age of humanism to a more mature phase of the European Renaissance and the beginnings of the modern age — a period profoundly marked by the spirit of the Reformation — the humanist style of learning gave way to a type of scholarship from which modern historiography emerged. The forces which joined together to form the genre of the 'history of philosophy' may be seen to have converged at a point which can conveniently be fixed around the middle of the seventeenth century. Those hundred years between the mid sixteenth and the mid seventeenth century, years which coincide with the age of Bruno, Galileo, Bacon, and Descartes, witnessed a great many contributions to scholarship which can be considered as the first attempts to present a historical exposition of the succession of events that marked the development of philosophy and philosophical wisdom.

We shall endeavour to simplify somewhat the details of the origin, derivation, and particular characteristics of the many works which were produced concurrently by grouping them together under a number of general trends and headings. We shall confine ourselves, moreover, to the presentation of a limited number of outlines of the history of philosophy drawn from each of the following areas: from the literature of polyhistory (that is, the work of the *polyhistor*, a scholar who is an active researcher into several different fields at once), from the introductions to philosophical teaching in the universities, from academic orations, and from the new currents of anti-Aristotelian thought (or at least those currents of thought which were obviously different from traditional scholastic Aristotelianism, and were concerned to increase the knowledge of, and sympathy for, other ancient philosophical sects). It should again be emphasized that the available mate-

rial is copious. We could have drawn on a much wider range of sources than is here possible. From such a vast quantity of material we have selected what seemed, in one way or another, most significant and representative of the greater variety of tendencies and inspirations which contributed, during the second half of the seventeenth century, towards the birth of the general histories of philosophy.

1. It will be necessary first of all to turn to the field of polyhistory. This was an uninterrupted tradition which continued for nearly two centuries, from Konrad Gesner's *Bibliotheca universalis* and *Pandectae* (in the second quarter of the sixteenth century) to the most complex and mature book of this kind, Daniel Morhof's *Polyhistor* (1688-92). In the wide-ranging works of erudition produced by these scholars, in their bibliographies, catalogues, and comprehensive reviews, there is always an area of research which Morhof describes as that of the *Polyhistor philosophicus*. The ideal of universal knowledge that inspired and motivated such works may be seen to have resulted, on the one hand, in a remarkable completeness of design in the overall range and plan of the collection, and, on the other, in a clear layout of the material, with articulate internal divisions according to historical-chronological criteria, thereby distinguishing the different areas of research and the different phases or periods. Authors such as Gesner and Frisius presuppose (and at times explicitly refer to) a concept of philosophy of a humanist or Ciceronian kind. For this reason the sections of their *Bibliotheca* dedicated to philosophical thought have broad limits, embracing all the traditional artistic disciplines, but especially that of literary culture (as for example in the *Prodromus* of Lambec). Already in the 1540s Gesner had devoted sections of his work to philosophical sects and philosophers' biographies. Later, at the end of the seventeenth century, in the work of Morhof, the design became more complex: we now find certain catalogues which list writings on the general history of philosophy, and others which focus on the history of the various sects (distinguishing furthermore between sects that were Greek in origin and those that were an expression of 'barbarian' thought).

We can also see the emergence of problems which were later to become characteristic of the general histories of philosophy. The 'lives' and the 'sects' of the philosophers were two categories taken over from Diogenes Laertius that were widely used in philosophical historiography. But they were soon subject to revision as the intellectual ideal passed on from being a straightforward history of philosophers to being the history of philosophies, or more simply of philosophy. In addition, the demands of chronology, which the polyhistor always had to take into account, tended to focus attention on the theme of periodization, a factor of great significance for the general historian of philosophy.

The Ciceronian (and later, Augustinian) connection between philosophy and wisdom, combined with the 'universalist' ideal, induced the polyhistor to extend the dominion of philosophical wisdom beyond the confines of classical culture. Was it not true that the Greeks had served their apprenticeship with those who were the inheritors of a wisdom that was far more ancient than their own: namely, the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the Jews? The discipline of polyhistory — especially within the Protestant tradition, animated as it was by a spirit of biblical religion, and motivated by a strong distrust of pagan classicism — had no hesitation in stating that philosophy had begun with the granting of divine revelation to the first man, and in broadening the overall vision of philosophical wisdom to include consideration of how it had been transmitted throughout every nation, including those which the classical tradition had defined as barbarian. This gave rise to the theme of 'barbarian philosophy', already familiar to Diogenes Laertius and present in the patristic tradition (particularly in St Augustine), and taken up again in part by humanists such as Vives or Platonists such as Ficino and Steuco. This theme was later to become important in the great general histories of philosophy of the modern age, at least up until Hegel.

2. Another powerful inspiration behind the first attempts at general histories of philosophy was the tradition of the schools and the universities, marked in varying degrees by the stamp of Aristotelianism. The first books of the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics* were the most widely used texts, from which sixteenth-century teachers drew the greatest quantity of teaching material and the greatest intellectual stimulus. Their purpose was to examine the 'opinions' of ancient philosophers prior to Aristotle concerning the principles of the natural world, and to reduce them to a well-defined theoretical-conceptual scheme. But this clearly delimited plan (which was marked by a strong theoretical and systematic tendency) was soon replaced by a scheme with a much broader frame of reference in which the historical element came to play a more important role. They began to reflect on the usefulness of knowing and understanding the opinions and reasons of the ancient philosophers, as well as those of Aristotle — seeing him, indeed, as one thinker among many, and no longer as the privileged figure, or culminating point, of that age. This represented a need for cultural enrichment which also worked to the benefit of the understanding and clarification of thought even in the conceptual and theoretical study of philosophy. Here we see the beginnings of the idea of a historical introduction to the study of philosophy: in the academic institutions, broad-based courses on philosophy began to give a more prominent place to comprehensive historical reviews of every manifestation of philosophical wisdom, reviews which might justifiably be called a 'general history' of philosophy.

One example of this was the 'De praecipuis philosophorum scholis atque

philosophiae magistris' in the *Introductio* by Ludovico Carboni da Costacciaro. Other examples, equally significant if more modest in dimensions, may be found in the sixteenth-century school of Padua with the great Francesco Piccolomini, whose example was passed on to such disciples as Luigi Pesaro and Johann Friedrich Schröter, one of the many German students at Padua who would transmit the Paduan Aristotelian tradition, and Piccolomini's thought in particular, to the nascent Aristotelianism that was then emerging in the Protestant universities of Germany (cf. Petersen, pp. 223, 251, 314). The other centre of the new sixteenth-century Aristotelianism, the so-called Second Scholastic in Spain, also produced work of this kind (as can be seen from the section on Benito Pereyra).

It was natural that the history of philosophy should have found one of its main sources in the schools, in the Aristotelian tradition of the universities which lasted, with remarkable continuity, from the Middle Ages, throughout the lively period of renewal in the Renaissance, well into the modern age, especially in cultural regions such as Spain, Italy, and Germany. In Germany in particular the renewal of philosophical thought with Leibniz, and even into the Enlightenment, occurred (as is well known) not as the restitution of a broken tradition but in an uninterrupted continuity assured by the universities. It was not by chance therefore that, beginning at the modest level of the didactic manual, but subsequently as the product of an increasingly thorough and profound conceptual elaboration, the genre of the general history of philosophy should have found its greatest expression in works produced towards the beginning of the eighteenth century precisely in Germany.

3. In addition to the research of the *polyhistor* and the Aristotelian scholastic tradition, one further area of scholarship made an important contribution towards the dawning of the era of our historiographical genre. This was the aspiration, motivated by both scholarly and religious needs, and especially lively and active in Protestant countries, to look ever further back in time so as to discover the ultimate origins of philosophical wisdom. Many of these historiographical efforts seem to have been inspired by a sort of mixture of love and hate for philosophy, understandable in minds that have received a strict Lutheran education mitigated by the humanism of a Melancthon. Philosophy could be seen as diabolical temptation, ensnaring the pride and curiosity of reason. But this was its degenerate pagan form. In its original form it was that wisdom given by God to Adam, the first man, which enabled him to name everything that had been created. Thus there was the need to overcome the chronological and topographical limitations of classical culture — something that had already been pointed out during the Renaissance by the Neoplatonists and by those who had begun again to study the thought of the Church Fathers.

From this came also the need to search much further back in time and

space in order to find the original source of philosophical wisdom; then to return again, through the complex network of nations and peoples (which nevertheless always remained in contact with the Jewish tradition), so as to reveal the continuity of a current of wisdom that had preserved for us, in various ways, our connection with this same original source.

These scholarly contributions were of various kinds. There were books that drew together, in the manner of a compendium, the sources, order of succession, and different phases of the many sects; academic orations that praised the antiquity of philosophy and its usefulness, even in theology, provided that 'sober use' was made of it; and there were works of proper antiquarian research, like that of Heurnius, into barbarian philosophy. All these contributions were dominated by one fundamental preoccupation: namely to discover, through a long and uninterrupted line of continuous transmission, the ultimate source of a remote and ancient wisdom dependent on an original act of revelation. This was the Protestant version of the Ficinian idea of a *prisca theologia*, which had given rise to the first efforts at outlining a general framework for such a study, and had also resulted, through the various directions taken by the concordist approach, in significant and wide-ranging studies constructed on a vast scale, as shown in exemplary fashion by the work of Agostino Steuco.

Thus the way was opened for research into the so-called barbarian philosophies. It was now commonly accepted that the Greeks were neither the 'inventors' of philosophy nor even its chief adepts. Johann Grün, following St Augustine, attempted to construct a 'philosophy of the history of philosophy', in which wisdom and philosophy represent the two Augustinian cities in a state of perennial tension and confusion between themselves: Adam and the 'good Abel' are theologian and philosopher combined while Cain is merely a philosopher, who cultivates only those arts which serve to promote well-being in the earthly life. The 'second age', from Abraham to Christ, is by no means entirely dominated by the Greeks, in spite of their philosophy and their many sects, since they were preceded and surrounded by the process of dispersal of the ancient wisdom throughout the barbarian peoples. Finally, with the coming of Christ and the advent of apostolic and patristic theology, came a full restoration of the lost wisdom, which was nevertheless destined to be corrupted once more during the papist Middle Ages, the age of the Antichrist, only then to be reborn and flourish again, after the defeat of the Antichrist by such thinkers as Dante, Marsilius of Padua, and John Hus, through Luther and Melancthon. The widening of the horizons of the classical sphere of Greek thought to include barbarian wisdom allowed for a very broad and general treatment of the whole history of thought, which went far beyond the boundaries of the classical world and traversed the medieval world, to arrive at the rebirth, or renaissance, which marks the advent of the modern age.

4. The last type of scholarly contribution which helped towards founding the general history of philosophy came from the anti-Aristotelian polemic that became evident in a number of different ways during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Such an attitude is exemplified by the position of the Italian scholar Paganino Gaudenzio, who recommended studying not just Aristotle but also Plato, the Stoics, and Pythagoras, not confining oneself to strict Aristotelianism, but broadening one's sphere of interest by studying the lives and historical epochs of all the philosophers. Such a need to escape from the ambit of Aristotelian ideas led him to abandon the usual history of the Greek sects, and instead to trace the course of philosophical history among the Romans, in a cultural sphere where philosophy also had its beginnings and its subsequent developments (*progressus*). A certain nationalistic impulse, combined with the desire to re-evaluate the barbarian philosophy, induced the French scholar Jean Cecile Frey, following the example of Symphorien Champier, to outline a history of the philosophy of the Druids, whose wisdom he supposed to have descended directly from the Hebrews, quite independently of the Greek philosophical tradition. Such an instance is typical of the general trend — and in this way the anti-Aristotelian polemic can be seen to have widened the horizons of philosophical thought and stimulated an awareness of other traditions.

From this came the studies of Heinsius and the much more important works of Justus Lipsius, Gassendi, Bérigard, and Magnen, who, in defending and taking the part of a sect other than the Peripatetic, felt a constant need, made more acute by the novelty and boldness of the choice, to justify it by reference to a vast historical framework of ancient thought.

Much the same thing happened, on the other hand, in the case of the German Aristotelian reformists of the seventeenth century. The 'return to Aristotle' could not and did not occur without provoking violent polemical arguments directed against what appeared to be the deformed Aristotelianism of the medieval Scholastics. The reformers felt the need to rescue Aristotle from a historical distance, so as to free him from any hint of medieval corruption, as they saw it. For this reason they frequently turned to the work of the Italian and French Aristotelians of the Renaissance, or of the exponents of the Second Scholastic in Spain (such as the followers of Suárez or the school of Coimbra), in addition to consulting the Greek text of Aristotle's works. And this occurred within the framework of a clear recognition of the importance of a full historical knowledge of the succession of events which marked the vicissitudes of the Aristotelian tradition.

1. THE LITERATURE OF POLYHISTORY

1.1. Konrad Gesner (1516–1565)

Konrad Gesner (Gessner, Gesnerus), philologist, physician, and naturalist, who was born in Zurich in 1516 and died in 1565 during the plague, lived most of his life there, holding many important offices in public administration. His literary activities encompassed the natural sciences (botany, zoology, mineralogy, etc.), medicine, the study of classical authors, and ancient languages.

Today, however, he is remembered not for his activity as a humanist or scientist, but for his works in the field of bibliography, of which he is considered the modern founder. One example, and new in its genre, is the *Bibliotheca universalis, sive catalogus omnium scriptorum locupletissimus, in tribus linguis, Latina, Graeca et Hebraica: extantium et non extantium, veterum et recentiorum in hunc usque diem, doctorum et indoctorum, publicatorum et in bibliothecis latentium. Opus novum et non bibliothecis tantum publicis privatisve instituendis necessarium, sed studiosis omnibus cuiuscunque artis aut scientiae ad studia melius formanda utilissimum: auctore Conrado Gesnero Tigurino, doctore, medico*, xvi + 631 fols. (Zurich, 1545; facs. repr., Osnabrück, 1966). The work consists of a catalogue of all the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew writers and their respective works, and is one of the first assessments of book production from the invention of printing to the middle of the sixteenth century. Responding to the humanists' concern with saving what remained of the cultural heritage of the past, in the beginning of the 'Epistola nuncupatoria', Gesner himself reported the destruction of libraries, not only in antiquity, but also in modern times, as for example, when the Turks set fire to the library at Buda in 1527:

But why do we deplore the past? Because of the terrible attack by the Turks, even the memory of that famous library of Buda, capital city of the kingdom of Pannonia, perished. King Matthias, who can never be praised sufficiently, had furnished this library with all kinds of writings in Greek and Hebrew, which he had acquired from Greece at enormous expense after Constantinople had been taken and many other Greek cities destroyed ('Epistola nuncupatoria', fol. [1]v).

Gesner's undertaking was thus both a cultural and civic one and not dry erudition. In this spirit he promoted the creation of public libraries in the 'Epistola nuncupatoria' ("only public libraries keep books for a very long time", fol. [2]r), not for the love of book collecting alone, but so that all citizens and scholars would have access to books ("and that they are readily available for use", *ibid.*). Brief biographical notes accompanied by further information and critical evaluations of the authors' works and Gesner's sources make the *Bibliotheca universalis* more than just a work of bibliographic identification.

In 1548, responding to the needs of the new library science, Gesner followed the *Bibliotheca universalis* with a second volume, also of a bibliographical nature, which had a new title and different internal structure: *Pandectarum, sive partitionum universalium Conradi Gesneri Tigurini, medici et philosophiae professoris libri XXI*, 540 fols. (Zurich, 1548). This second work was no longer a bibliographical catalogue of authors in alphabetical order, but according to subject matter. A census of existing book production according to the rules of modern library science, identifying the various editions and translations of a work, indicating the place and date of publication, and containing

specific information about the sources from which the bibliographical information could be obtained.

The *Bibliotheca universalis* and the books of the *Pandectae* were to have been followed by a third volume containing a catalogue by subject matter, which was never published (see the 'Epistola nuncupatoria' at the beginning of the *Bibliotheca universalis*, fol. [6]^v).

Apart from a tendency to embrace the *historia litteraria* in its entirety and an acceptance of the humanist ideal of a universal wisdom, certain sections of the *Pandectae* (the most original of Gesner's bibliographical works), containing a bibliographic selection on the history of philosophy, are of particular interest for the history of the history of philosophy. Bk. I, part VII of heading I is dedicated to philosophical sects ('De sectis philosophorum et artium inventione', fol. 3^v). Similar to this are part I of the same heading ('De philosophia quaedam in genere', fols. 1^v-2^r), part III ('Laudes philosophiae', fols. 2^v-3^v), part VI ('De viris doctis in genere', fol. 3^v), and part XIII ('Libri et compendia in omnes artes liberales, vel in totam philosophiam', fol. 6^r). Among the historical writings to which Bk. XII is dedicated appears yet again Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis celebrium philosophorum* (fol. 122^v), to which the author refers several times during the course of his systematic review.

A better organized bibliography of ancient philosophers, which also took into account development in time of the history of philosophy, is found at the beginning of Bk. XV ('De prima philosophia', heading 1, fols. 238^r-242^r). It is easy to observe that this part of the *Pandectae* implied a certain subdivision into periods, or rather a cataloguing of the history of philosophy into sects. After enumerating some general historiographical works such as Eunapius' *De vitis philosophorum et sophistarum*, Laertius' *De vita et moribus philosophorum*, Lucian's *De moribus philosophorum*, John of Waleys's *De vitis illustrium philosophorum gentilium, eorumque dictis et exemplis*, as well as Justinus Goblerus' *Philosophorum personae libri quattuor prosopopoeiae* and Favorinus of Arles's *De philosophorum diaeta*, Gesner does a bibliographical review of various authors and the schools they founded: Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, the Academics, the Pyrrhonists, the Stoics, and the Epicureans. The remaining philosophers or wise men, finally, were grouped in alphabetical order in one single section. Among them should be mentioned al-Ghazzali, Anaxagoras, Anaxarchus, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Aristippus of Cyrene, Carneades, Democritus, Empedocles, Aesop, Pythagoras, Xenophon, the Seven Wise Men, and Thales. As can be seen, the philosophy to which Gesner refers is always that of the Greek *oecumene* (with the sole exception of the medieval Arab philosopher al-Ghazzali), since he depended largely on the historical line traced by Diogenes Laertius.

Finally, let us observe the reception of Gesner's bibliographies. In the thirty years after its publication three editions of the *Bibliotheca universalis* were

produced: one edited by Gesner's biographer J. Simler in 1555, a second also edited by Simler in 1574, and a third edited by the philosopher and theologian Johann Jacob Fries (Frisius) in 1583. The theologians of the Counter-Reformation attributed particular importance to Gesner's *Bibliotheca universalis* and *Pandectae*, from which they derived the first index of prohibited books. In time, however, these works lost their character as critical bibliographies and became merely identifying bibliographies — some authors were removed and others were expurgated in an attempt to "make the texts inoffensive" (Balsamo, *Il canone bibliografico di K. Gesner*, p. 92). In this way, the work became useful to typographers and bibliophiles rather than to scholars. In its reduced form it inspired such similar publications as the bibliographical catalogue by Robert Constantin (1502–1605): *Nomenclator insignium scriptorum, quorum libri extant vel manuscripti, vel impressi: ex bibliothecis Galliae et Angliae: indexque totius Bibliothecae, atque Pandectarum doctissimi atque ingeniosissimi viri C. Gesneri, R. Constantino autore . . .*, 189 pp. (Paris, 1555), which consisted of a bibliographical index of authors and their respective works without any further bibliographical information (no year of publication, printer, format, pages, etc.). Subdivided according to the various disciplines (grammar, history, poetry, exegesis and art of commentary, rhetoric, dialectic, art of memory, philosophy, mathematics, theology, medicine, law, mechanics, statics, and other individual sciences) the work was simply an index of Gesner's monumental bibliographical enterprises.

On the life and works:

Adam, [III], pp. 64–76; Freher, Vol. II, pp. 1255–6; Nicéron, Vol. XVII, pp. 337–71; BUAM, Vol. XVI, pp. 361–4; EI, Vol. XV, p. 851; DSB, Vol. V, pp. 378–9; A. Serai, *Conrad Gesner*, ed. M. Cochetti, with a bibliography of the works prepared by M. Menato (Rome, 1990). A sixteenth-century biography: J. Simler, *Vita clarissimi philosophi et medici excellentissimi Conradi Gesneri Tigurini* (Zurich, 1566). A census of Aristotelian commentaries edited by Gesner is in C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 166–7.

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. I, ch. 18, §§ 5–10, pp. 197–8; Struve, Vol. I, ch. 5, § 13, pp. 389, 395; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 24, § 1, pp. 132–4; Stolle, pp. 30–32.

On the significance of his work:

Sandys, Vol. II, pp. 269–70; J. C. Bay, 'Konrad Gesner, the Father of Bibliography', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, x (1916), pp. 53 ff.; P. E. Schazmann, 'Konrad Gesner et les débuts de la bibliographie universelle', *Libri*, 1952–1953, pp. 37–49; H. Fischer, *Conrad Gessner: Leben und Werk*, Zurich, 1966; Wilamowitz, p. 45; Jasenas, pp. 16 ff.; G. Manfrè, 'Il fondatore della bibliografia moderna: Conrad Gessner (1516–1565)', in *Scritti in onore di Mons. Giuseppe Turrini* (Accademia di Agricoltura, Scienze e Lettere di Verona, 1973), pp. 399–403; Braun, p. 78; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 17 n. 24; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24; L. Balsamo, 'Il canone bibliografico di Konrad Gesner e il concetto di Biblioteca pubblica nel Cinquecento', in *Studi di biblioteconomia*

e storia del libro in onore di Francesco Barberi (Associazione italiana Biblioteche, Rome, 1976), pp. 77-95; Malclès, pp. 22-5; Balsamo, pp. 34-43.

1.2. Johann Jacob Fries (1541-1611)

A scholarly point of view attempting the universal comprehension of knowledge which had been evident in Gesner's works was encapsulated during the second half of the sixteenth century in the work of the philosopher and theologian Johann Jacob Fries (Frisius), who was born in Zurich in 1541 and died there during the plague of 1611.

Having been appointed director of the Zurich Public Library, Fries compiled a bio-bibliographical index dedicated specifically to philosophers from the creation of the world to the year 1540: *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum auctorum chronologica. In qua veterum philosophorum origo, successio, aetas, et doctrina compendiosa, ab origine mundi, usque ad nostram aetatem proponitur. Quibus accessit Patrum Ecclesiae Christi doctorum: a temporibus Apostolorum, usque ad tempora Scholasticorum ad an. usque Do. 1140, secundum eandem temporis seriem, enumeratio. Ioanne Iacobo Frisio Tigurino auctore. Opus novum: bibliothecariis, philosophis et theologis utile: atque omnibus literatis iucundum lectu futurum*, 110 fols. (Zurich, 1592).

It should be said straight away that Fries used the concept 'philosopher' in rather a broad sense. A philosopher was simply a wise man, and Fries avoided mentioning the specific fields in which any philosopher had worked. Thus, in the preface, Fries stated that he had worked "on the basis of authors of all kinds" (fol. [3]v) and defined his work as "a series and succession of the most famous writers in sacred and profane letters" (fol. [5]r). He therefore described not only philosophers in the proper sense of the word, but also poets, historians, legislators, physicians, and men of science; the sole proviso for including a person was that he had left a trace in the history of sacred or profane letters. For example, Fries mentions the following for the year 1270: Alfonso X, King of Castile, for his astronomical tables; the physician William of Piacenza and his *Summa conservationis et curationis*; James of Belvisio, the author of a *Practica criminalis*; Petrus Hispanus (Pope John XXI) and his well known *Summulae logicales*; and finally, in smaller print, Ptolemy of Lucca, author of the *Historia Pontificum*.

Fries's *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum* is different from Gesner's work not only in its content, but also in its organization. He abandoned the alphabetical order and instead adopted a chronological one: "I have recorded those whom I have been able to find; and I have arranged them in a continuous chronology according to the decades in which they appear to have flourished, prior to the dates of their deaths" (fol. [1]v). This is a clear shift from Gesner's humanist-bibliophile interests to Fries's more consciously historiographical ones. The chronological structure followed biblical and classical traditions: the creation of the world and the birth of Christ. Like Diogenes Laertius before him, he did not give each author's date of birth and death, but gave the period at which he reached his peak. This chronological arrangement was followed by a short account of where the 'philosopher' lived, his life, his teachings and his writings.

As Fries pointed out on the title page, in the same volume as the *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum* he also published a text entitled *Bibliotheca Patrum minor* on fols. 58-88, in which he listed the Church Fathers up to the year 1140, still following

chronological order. For Scholastic philosophers, purposely excluded from the preceding works, and for ecclesiastical authors from 1140 to the sixteenth century, Fries refers to another of his works, identified merely as a *Bibliotheca Patrum maior sive Nomenclator Theologicus*. He cites it more fully at the end of his *Bibliotheca Patrum minor*:

Now ends the enumeration of the Fathers ordered according to the sequence of the places in time when they flourished. They are preceded by the patriarchs, prophets, and Apostles. The Fathers themselves are followed by the Scholastics and more recent theologians. All these lights of the Church of God are dealt with in the *Bibliotheca patrum maior: sive nomenclator theologicus: secundum eandem temporis seriem, ab origine mundi, usque ad praesentem annum Do. 1592 conscriptus: et historiis doctrinae Ecclesiae Dei brevissimus illustratis*, by the same author as this little work, I. I. F. T.

Although they belonged in part to the category of polyhistory because of the quantity and range of cultural interests that inspired them, from a methodological point of view Fries' bibliographical writings should more properly be linked with the *Tables* of the successions of philosophers already traced by Guillaume Morel (Morellius) and David Chytrée (Chytraeus) towards the middle of the century. Fries himself admitted that he referred to Morel to resolve the chronological difficulties he encountered when he compiled his index: "Then I came across the table edited 45 years ago by the most learned G. Morellius Tiletanus, assembled from the works of Plutarch, Laertius, and Cicero, and dealing with the origin, succession, age, and doctrine of the ancient philosophers, which was published in Paris in the year 1547. I have transcribed it all and accommodated it to our purpose" (preface to the *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum*, fol. [I]^v). However, Fries' *Bibliotheca* was distinguished from such tables by its breadth, by the quantity of chronological notes and bibliographical information, and by the variety of authors surveyed.

For bibliographical notes on Fries see:

BUAM, Vol. xv, pp. 192-3.

On the reception of the *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum*:

Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. 1, ch. 18, § 10, p. 198; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 1, § 2, p. 3; Heumann, Vol. 1, pp. 720-24; Jonsius, Vol. 11, Bk. 111, ch. 25, § 10, pp. 139-40; Stolle, pp. 32-4; Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 34; Vol. vi, p. 24; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. 1, p. xxix; Orloff, p. 9.

On the significance of his work:

Jasenas, pp. 18 ff.; Braun, p. 57; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 20 n. 40; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24; Del Torre, pp. 10-11; Malclès, p. 21.

1.3. Paulus Bolduan

Erudite work was also produced by Paulus Bolduan (Bolduanus), pastor of the Church of Stolpen in Pomerania, who lived in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Bibliotheca philosophica sive elenchus scriptorum philosophicorum atque philologicorum illustrium, qui philosophiam eiusque partes aut omnes aut praecipuas, quovis tempore idiomateve usque in annum praesentem Redemptionis 1614 descripserunt, illustrarunt et exornarunt, secundum artes et disciplinas, tum liberales, tum Mechanicas earumque titulos et locos communes, autorumque nomina ordine alphabetico digesta. Accesserunt Graecae Latinaeque linguarum tum prosarum tum ligatarum Authores classici, illorum aetates atque interpretes, ac inde extracta variarum linguarum Lexica, Loci communes Apophthegmata, Colloquia, Phrases et c. additis artium et scientiarum Studiosis, ad studia sua commodius formanda, maxime utilis et pernecessarius. Concinnatus studio et opera Pauli Bolduani Stolp. Pom. Ecclesiae Christi, quam Vessini sibi collegit, pastoris, 647 pp., plus 'Praefationes' and 'Index rerum', unpaginated (Jena, 1616).

The work consists of a vast bibliographical index subdivided according to the trivium and the quadrivium. The title *philosophica* is given to this *Bibliotheca* because Bolduan applies the term 'philosophy' to all the arts and sciences: "Almost all of the arts and sciences which have so far been mentioned in a brief and summary manner are comprehensively subsumed under the magnificent heading of philosophy" ('Epistola dedicatoria', fol. [3]^r). This accorded with the humanist concept of philosophy. Echoing the Ciceronian view in the *Tusculanae* and that of Augustine in the *De civitate Dei*, he praises philosophy as the wise master of the civilization of nations: "You brought forth cities; you assembled scattered men into the society of life. You tied them together first through homes, then through marriages, and finally through the common possession of letters and words. You invented laws; you were the master of morals and discipline. You have given us the tranquillity of life, and you took away the fear of death" ('Epistola dedicatoria', fol. [3]^v).

The ideas expressed by the author in the 'Epistola dedicatoria' are particularly relevant to the history of the history of philosophy. Here Bolduan summarizes the history of wisdom from its biblical origins to the more recent developments of the Jewish revelation. According to him, before the Fall, Adam and Eve had established a "learned society" (*coetus scholasticus*) in which they not only pursued practical activities and glorified God, but also held theoretical discussions on the creator of the world. God was the first teacher, Adam the first pupil, later joined by Eve. Adam established the "philosophical model" (*specimen philosophicum*) when, by divine command, he gave names to every living creature, an action which required great wisdom. Later the Primogenitors' philosophical wisdom was obscured by original sin, but it was not entirely erased from their souls nor from the souls of their descendants. Thus it was handed down from generation to generation through various schools: Adam's first, then Noah's (who even in the ark during the Flood never gave up teaching his family, not only about the

fundamentals of religion, but also about human wisdom, the movements of the stars, and natural phenomena, in particular the rainbow), There followed the schools of Abraham and Moses: the latter instituted, near the Tabernacle, an "association of teachers and pupils" (*coetus docentium et discentium*), the Levites, a kind of academy, flourishing until the advent of Christ. In this way, the prophets themselves could be considered to be philosophers. Thus Jewish philosophical wisdom spread to other Eastern nations, particularly during the Jews' exile in the Babylonian empire. Jewish philosophy also reached Persia, where the last Magi recognized the mysterious star that announced the birth of the Messiah. He, finally, was the true master, as he himself proclaimed (Matt. 23 : 8) : the personification of uncreated wisdom, philosopher *par excellence*, and founder of his own school consisting of twelve Apostles and seventy disciples.

For brief bibliographical notes on Bolduan :
Jöcher, Vol. 1, col. 1206.

On the reception of Bolduan's *Bibliotheca* :

Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. 1, ch. 18, § 12, pp. 199–200 ; *Polyhistor practicus*, Bk. IV, § 2, p. 510 and § 7, p. 514 ; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 1, § 2, p. 4 ; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 26, § 14, p. 148.

On the significance of Bolduan's work :

Jasenas, pp. 33 ff. ; Braun, p. 370 ; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 21 n. 40 ; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24 ; Malclès, p. 40. On seventeenth-century encyclopaedism see C. Vasoli, *L'enciclopedia del Seicento* (Naples, 1978).

1.4. Peter Lambec (1628–1680)

The principal objective of polyhistory, encyclopaedism, was partly achieved in the *Prodromus historiae literariae, et Tabula duplex chronographica universalis* (Hamburg, 1629)¹ by Peter Lambec (Lambeck, Lambect, Lambecius), a learned German bibliographer and scholar who was appointed as director of the Imperial Library in Vienna, where he compiled an extraordinary catalogue.

In the *Prodromus* the author sketches a synoptic picture of the scientific, civil, religious, and literary history of every nation according to the conventions and taste of the polyhistory : erudition, curiosity regarding the written document, interest in books and their various editions, research into manuscripts, and philological and textual criticism. As he says in the 'Praefatio Editoris ad Lectorem', fol. [1]^r :

¹ References here are to Fabricius' edition : *Prodromus historiae literariae, Et Tabula duplex Chronologica Universalis. Accedunt in hac editione praeter Auctoris Iter Cellense, et Alexandri Ficheti, S. I. Arcanam Studiorum Methodum, atque ideam locorum communium nunc primum in lucem editus Wilhelmi Langii Catalogus librorum Mss. Bibliothecae Mediceae, curante Jo. Alberto Fabricio* (Leipzig and Frankfurt, 1710).

You may study natural, civil, ecclesiastic, or literary history; history in its entirety should be pleasurable and incredibly useful to those who know it, yet to an extent each of these branches of history is, in a manner of speaking, infinite and riddled with various difficulties (*pluribus obsepta tenebris*), and each comprises a quantity and variety of things elusive (*fugiens*) to the minds of mortals.

The work, which breaks off after Bk. 11, ch. 4 (38 chapters had been planned), covers roughly thirteen centuries of cultural and civil history before the advent of Christ, from the creation of the world up to Moses (Bk. 1, pp. 1-118), and from Moses to the mission of the Argonauts (Bk. 11, pp. 119-96).

By both adopting the humanist notion of philosophy like other scholars of his time and by following the requirements of polyhistory, Lambec characterizes the history of philosophy as part of the broader literary history of nations. Thus in the *Prodromus* philosophers' lives and thought are mingled with those of scientists, mathematicians, poets, jurists, founders of religions, heretics, and monarchs. A detailed analysis of the limited material on history of philosophy in this book shows how for Lambec this literary genre included descriptions about the origins, development, and classifications of philosophy within each nation. He dwelt on the different approaches to ancient wisdom among the Chaldeans, Magi, Egyptians, and Jews, pointing out their principal stages of development and giving a picture of the most ancient peoples' theology and cosmology. He quoted fragments from the Chaldean oracles on God, the divine mind, the human soul, the body, the world, and demons, which had already been published by Patrizi: "The remains of the sacred oracles of Julian Chaldaeus the Younger called Theurgus, which have so far been wrongly ascribed to Zoroaster, have been collected by Francesco Patrizi from the writings of Platonic philosophers and subdivided into eleven groups or chapters: see the edition of Ferrara of the year 1591, in folio" (pp. 97-106). Judging from the space allotted to him, Hermes Trismegistus was very important to Lambec. He dwelt at length on this mythical Oriental sage and quoted the 'Catalogue of books by Hermes Trismegistus according to Clement of Alexandria' (pp. 136-7). In addition to Clement of Alexandria, he drew on innumerable other sources to provide an erudite analysis of Hermes' *prisca sapientia*: Iamblichus, Diogenes Laertius, Pliny the Elder, Marsilio Ficino, Francesco Patrizi, Konrad Gesner, Michael Psellos (see pp. 137-143), and the many other writers he had at his disposal. Moses, too, was given a place of honour in the *Prodromus* (pp. 143 ff.) as "theologian, prophet, legislator, judge, physician, physicist (*Physicus*), ethicist, historian, orator, poet, and grammarian" (p. 146), and as the author of numerous writings on wisdom, which Lambec classified into three categories: the authentic (pp. 147-8), those of uncertain attribution (pp. 148-9), and the spurious (pp. 149-55).

In a rather prolix and diffuse appendix (pp. 197-282), Lambec provided some outlines, which he called *sciagraphiae*, of the rest of the work which, in

time, he hoped to complete. This material, not yet organized into a discourse, also pertained to the history of philosophy and included a chronological table taken from Diogenes Laertius (p. 206), numerous lists of Greek and Roman philosophers, Church Fathers, medieval and modern philosophers (Lambec does not discriminate, as the latter held a place equal to the ancients), all classified and subdivided according to chronological criteria. For example, in the *sciagraphia* of ch. 29: "During the century after the beginning of the twelfth Christian era, from A.M. 5150 to A.M. 5249, or from A.D. 1201 to A.D. 1300" (pp. 269-72), there appeared among the physicians and philosophers (these categories are always connected): "Demetrius Pepagomenus, Guglielmo da Saliceto of Verona, Taddeo Alderotti, Lanfranc of Milan, Alfonso king of Castile, the Englishman Gervase of Tilbury, Jordanus Nemorarius, Roger Bacon, Alexander de Villa Dei, the Englishman Walter Odington, Johannes de Sacro Bosco, Johannes Balbus of Genoa". Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, Aegidius Romanus, Raymond Lull, Henry of Ghent, and John of Paris, on the other hand, appeared among the ecclesiastical writers, while William of Saint-Amour was numbered among the Christian heretics.

For bibliographical notes on Lambec:

Niceron, Vol. xxx, pp. 80-95; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 2215-17; Jöcher (Erg.), Vol. III, coll. 1079-83; BUAM, Vol. xxIII, pp. 36-7; ADB, Vol. xvII, pp. 533-6. See also the *Catalogus librorum quos Petrus Lambecius Hamburgensis . . . composuit et in lucem edidit ab anno aetatis decimo nono usque ad quadragesimum quintum . . .* (Vienna, 1673).

On the reception of the *Prodromus historiae literariae*:

PhT, II, no. 30, December 1667, pp. 575-6; Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. I, ch. 2, § 5, p. 10, and ch. 16, § 77, pp. 185-6; Struve, Vol. I, ch. I, § 2, p. 5, and ch. 3, § 5, p. 182; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, chap. 30, § 1, pp. 169-70; Stolle, pp. 34-5; Brucker, Vol. VI, p. 24; Ortlöff, p. 4.

On the significance of his work:

Sandys, Vol. II, p. 365; Braun, p. 80, n. 94; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 17 n. 24; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24.

1.5. Martin Lipen (1630-1692)

The German bibliographer and scholar Martin Lipen (Lipenius) was born at Gortze in Brandenburg in 1630 and died in Lübeck in 1692. He too was part of the cultural movement of the polyhistor. In the *Bibliotheca realis*, a series of volumes published between 1679 and 1685, he provided a systematic census of every existing literary production, subdividing it into four groups: theology, law, medicine, and philosophy.

These are copious bibliographical indexes according to subject, arranged in alphabetical order. In the individual title pages the author, following the style of his time, described his work as follows: (1) *Bibliotheca realis theologica, omnium materialium, rerum et titulorum in universo sacro-sanctae theologiae studio occurrentium ordine alphabetico sic disposita, ut primo statim adspectu tituli, et sub titulis autores iusta velut acie collocati in oculos pariter et animos lectorum incurrant*, 2 vols. in fol. (Frankfurt/M., 1685); (2) *Bibliotheca realis juridica omnium materialium, rerum et titulorum in universo universi juris ambitu occurrentium . . .*, in fol., pp. x + 560 (Frankfurt/M., 1679); (3) *Bibliotheca realis medica omnium materialium, rerum et titulorum in universa medicina occurrentium . . .*, in fol., pp. xvii + 492 (Frankfurt/M., 1679); (4) *Bibliotheca realis philosophica omnium materialium, rerum et titulorum in universo totius philosophiae ambitu occurrentium . . .*, 2 vols. in fol. (Frankfurt/M., 1682; facsimile reprint, Hildesheim, 1967).

These bibliographical collections included one of the principal aims of poly-history, criticism. Lipen vindicated the authorship of each work, distinguished the true from the false, made a census of all the writers, and corrected what had been handed down in an incorrect form in earlier work in all the sciences and disciplines. He was certain that only in this way could universal knowledge, also called *pansophia* or *polymateia* (albeit with different semantic connotations), be attained. It was philosophical knowledge, rather than legal or medical knowledge, that contributed to the achievement of this encyclopaedic objective, Lipen believed, and he identified philosophy with *polymatheia* or *pansophia* following the humanist tradition. In the preface to the *Bibliotheca realis philosophica* he wrote:

I take the word philosophy in a broad sense (*in ea latitudine capio*), as is common in the academies (*Academiis*). In these, apart from the three faculties of theology, law and medicine, one finds also philosophy. The latter deals with those arts and sciences which the other three just mentioned either presuppose, exclude from consideration, or are closely connected with. Thus all knowledge of languages, antiquities, and sciences, all criticism (*Critica*) of ancient and more recent writers, all history, philology, rhetoric, poetics — in short, anything bearing the name of *polymatheia* or *pansophia*, are related to philosophy ('Praefatio ad lectorem', fol. [1]r).

Following this definition, the *Bibliotheca philosophica* includes bibliographical material of various kinds: historical, geographical, linguistic, scientific, philological, poetic, rhetorical, in addition to philosophical in the true sense of the word. Thus the work does not, apparently, directly concern the historiography of philosophy. Nevertheless, like Gesner's writings, this work is mentioned here because it contains some bibliographical sections dedicated to the history of philosophy: 'apophthegmata' (pp. 84-5), 'axiomata' (pp. 153-4), 'barbarica philosophia' (pp. 157-8), 'bibliotheca philosophica' (p. 198), 'conciliationes philosophicae' (p. 332), 'consensus philosophiae et philosophorum' (p. 336), 'controversiae' (p. 343-4), 'cribum philosophicum' (philosophical riddles) (p. 356), 'Danica philosophiae' (p. 371), 'differentiae

philosophicae' (p. 385), 'florilegium philosophicum' (pp. 516–17), 'Gallica philosophiae' (p. 555), 'gentilis philosophia' (pp. 568–9), 'Germanica philosophia' (p. 596), 'historia philosophica' (p. 673), 'Laertius' (all editions of *De vitis philosophorum*) (p. 779), 'lexicon philosophicum' (p. 809), 'philosophiae origines' (pp. 1128–9), 'philosophus/philosophi' (p. 1145), 'placita philosophorum' (p. 1172), 'primordia philosophiae' (p. 1245), 'scriptores philosophici' (pp. 1378–9), 'sectae philosophorum' (p. 1381), 'vitae philosophorum' (pp. 1558–60).

It should be observed that in some of these bibliographical sections Lipen pointed out interesting writings on the general history of philosophy, which were not usually recorded in historiographical philosophical literature. These include *De philosophiae ortu* and *De praecipuis philosophorum scholis* by Ludovico Carboni (Carbone) of Costacciaro, mentioned in the *Introductio in universam philosophiam* (pp. 1139, 1378; see below). He also mentioned *De propagatione et autoribus philosophiae* by Schröter (p. 1129; see below), the *Collegium philosophicum de variis veterum philosophorum placitis* (Aarhus, 1636) by Hans Hansson Skønning (Scanius) (p. 311), and *De philosophiae propagatione et philosophis libri IX* (Leiden, 1631) (pp. 1121, 1145) and *De scriptoribus civilis philosophiae* (Helmstedt, 1673) (pp. 1139, 1378) both by Hermann Conring (Conringius).

On the life and works:

Niceron, Vol. XIX, pp. 185–91; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 2460–61; Jöcher (Erg.), Vol. III, coll. 1920–22; BUAM, Vol. XXIV, pp. 584–5; ADB, Vol. XVIII, pp. 725–6.

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. 1, ch. 17, § 16, p. 200; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 1, § 2, p. 4; Vol. II, chap. 2, § 15, p. 208; Orloff, p. 10.

On the significance of Lipen's work:

Jasenas, pp. 42 ff.; Braun, p. 373; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 21 n. 40; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24; Malclès, p. 41; Balsamo, p. 60.

1.6. Daniel Georg Morhof (1639–1691)

The characteristics of polyhistory — curiosity about literature in the broadest sense of the word, erudition, encyclopaedism, census-taking of everything written not only by the ancients, but also by medieval and modern writers — are best realized in the *Polyhistor sive de notitia auctorum et rerum commentarii. Quibus praeterea varia ad omnes disciplinae consilia et subsidia proponuntur*, 557 pp. (Lübeck, 1688–92) by the German scholar Daniel Georg Morhof (Morhofius)².

In this work, the literary material was no longer assembled according to

² References here are to the fourth and last edition (Lübeck, 1747).

purely extrinsic criteria, as it had been by earlier authors: alphabetical order of authors (Gesner), chronological order (Fries), or alphabetical order of subject matter (Lipen). Morhof did not even attempt to devise a chronological literary and cultural history of all peoples, as Peter Lambec had done in his *Prodromus historiae literariae*, since he was aware that it was impossible to embrace knowledge in its entirety, whether in the form of a catalogue or inventory comprising all human knowledge, or a synchronic picture of every nation's cultural, religious, and civil history.

Instead, Morhof's critical presentation of past texts in the fields of literature, philosophy, civil customs, and applied science provided a somewhat schematic outline of the cultural history of various peoples. In the *Polyhistor* he collected and presented what could be defined as the seventeenth-century scholar's 'library', by furnishing a quantity of bibliographical material in the tradition of erudition and polyhistory.

The history of philosophy in particular is Morhof's subject in Bk. 1, 'Philosophico-Historicus', of Vol. 11 of the *Polyhistor* (which had the title *Polyhistor Philosophicus*). It is in 15 chapters, the first dedicated to the general histories of philosophy ('De historia philosophiae in genere, ac in specie barbaricae populorum orientalium et septentrionalium eiusque scriptoribus', pp. 1-10). The remaining chapters dealt with writings about the various philosophical sects or schools from antiquity to his times (ch. 2: 'De philosophiae Pythagoricae historia, eiusque scriptoribus', pp. 11-20; ch. 3: 'De philosophiae socraticae scriptoribus', pp. 20-22; ch. 4: 'De philosophiae storicae scriptoribus', pp. 22-24; ch. 5: 'De philosophiae epicureae scriptoribus', pp. 24-29; ch. 6: 'De scriptoribus scepticis', pp. 29-32; ch. 7: 'De philosophiae platonicae scriptoribus', pp. 32-43; ch. 8: 'De Aristotele, scriptoribusque de secta ac philosophiae peripatetica isagogicis ac historicis', pp. 43-47; ch. 9: 'De interpretibus Aristotelis Graecis', pp. 47-52; ch. 10: 'De interpretibus Aristotelis Arabicis', pp. 52-53; ch. 11: 'De interpretibus Aristotelis Latinis', pp. 53-64; ch. 12: 'De Aristotelis impugnatoribus', pp. 65-72; ch. 13: 'De doctoribus scholasticis in genere, et nominalibus in specie', pp. 72-82; ch. 14: 'De scholasticis realibus', pp. 82-106; ch. 15: 'De novatoribus in philosophia', pp. 106-120).

When he described general histories of philosophy, Morhof introduced a two-fold classification, one comprising Greek thought and the other all the other philosophies (Chaldean, Indian, Hebrew, Northern or Icelandic). Morhof presented Diogenes Laertius as the most important historian of Greek philosophy, without whom little would have been known about the life and thought of the ancient Greeks or the schools to which they had belonged. There followed two other ancient authors, Eunapius and Hesychius of Miletus, and four modern ones: Vossius, Hornius, Jonsius, and Pereyra. The survey of authors of general histories of non-Greek thought opened with the Englishman Theophile Gale (Galeus), author of the *Philosophia generalis*, the first part of which discussed the Hebrew origins of philosophy (see below). Morhof then presented the works by Otto Heurnius, Palladius, and Abraham Roger on Chaldean and Indian philosophy. For ancient Chaldean and Egyptian wisdom he availed himself of the

writings of Hermes Trismegistus and Zoroaster edited by Patrizi. Finally, there was a paragraph concerned with general studies on the philosophy of northern peoples, especially Icelandic philosophy.

After this section dealing with general works, as may be seen from the arrangement of chapters listed above, Morhof went on to "turn to the sects of the philosophers" (p. 11). Here, too, he did not provide a proper history of philosophy according to sects, but continued to present a critical catalogue of works on the various philosophical schools: the Pythagorean, Socratic, Stoic, and Epicurean schools; Sceptics and Platonists; Aristotle, the Aristotelians, and the adversaries of Aristotle; the Scholastics; and finally the *novatores*, philosophers and thinkers of the modern age.

In presenting this veritable seventeenth-century scholar's 'library', Morhof's principal intention was not to illustrate the thought and personalities of the principal philosophers, but to review the critical studies on different sects and to list current editions of past philosophers' works. For example, in the chapter on Stoicism, he first gave brief general information about the sect and its founder Zeno, and then presented Justus Lipsius' work on Stoicism, Jasper Schopp's *Elementa philosophiae stoicae moralis* (Mainz, 1606), Jakob Thomasius' *Dissertationes stoicae*, and finally the current editions of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius' *Memoirs*, and the slave Epictetus' *Manual*.

Insights into Morhof's conception of the basic outlines of the history of philosophy in the *Polyhistor philosophicus* can also be gained from remarks introducing the various philosophical sects and from judgements found throughout the work, and perhaps above all from the general structure of that part of the *Polyhistor* dedicated to the history of philosophy. According to Morhof, the history of philosophy is always the history of philosophical sects. Aristotle, in particular, and his successors and commentators are given conspicuous prominence in spite of the waves of anti-Aristotelianism created by Bacon's theory of science and by seventeenth-century Cartesianism. Medieval philosophy, identified with Scholasticism, was subdivided into the two great movements of the Nominalists and the Realists. To Morhof, the whole problem of the Middle Ages was covered by this dispute. The moderns, the *novatores in philosophia*, were viewed as anti-Aristotelians, ambitious, and incapable of a profound renewal of philosophy. He writes about them:

Most of them attempted a rebellion and strove to conquer the tyranny of the peripatetics (*tyrannis peripateticae*). . . . In addition these innovators (*novatores*) do not share the same genius; some of them are mad in their reasoning (*aliqui illorum cum ratione insaniunt*), some are entirely inept (*quidam toti sunt inepti*) and have introduced nothing new into philosophy apart from various terminologies (*prae-ter terminorum varietates*). . . . The quest for a little fame obsessed many, but only a few were led by the study of truth (p. 108).

The *novatores* were, among others, Telesio, Cardano, Hobbes, Paracelsus, and Comenius. Descartes stood out among them, himself the founder of a new philosophical sect which had spread through Belgium, England, France, and many parts of Germany.

In conclusion, we should note here that Morhof's intentions are again arranged and expanded in the light of the whole of German historiography in the first years of the eighteenth century, in the *Bibliotheca philosophica* of Burckhard Gotthelf Struve (Struvius). Struve in fact, modelled his work on Morhof's *Polyhistor philosophicus*, and followed its subdivisions and structure: 'De scriptoribus qui Bibliothecam philosophicam et Vitas philosophorum scripserunt', 'De fontibus philosophiae', 'De scriptoribus qui Historiam philosophicam, methodum tractandi, paedias, systemata et controversias philosophiae scripserunt', 'De scriptoribus Logicis, Metaphysicis et Hermeneuticis', 'De scriptoribus Physicis, Theologiae Naturalis et Pneumaticis' (Vol. I); 'De scriptoribus philosophiae practicae generatim et sigillatim Ethicis', 'De scriptoribus Politicis', 'De scriptoribus Iuris Naturae et Gentium', 'De scriptoribus Oeconomicis, auctoribus lexicorum philosophicorum atque collectionibus dissertationum' (Vol. II) (see SSGF, II, p. 482).

On the life and works:

Niceron, Vol. II, pp. 16-25 and x/2, p. 79; Jöcher, Vol. III, coll. 671-5; Jöcher (Erg.), Vol. IV, coll. 2119-21; BUAM, Vol. XXIX, pp. 316-17; EI, Vol. XXXIII, p. 851.

On the reception:

HOS, Vol. II, June 1688, pp. 158-78; AE, 1688, pp. 564-8; Struve, Vol. I, ch. I, § 2, p. 5; AE, 1708, pp. 292-8; JS, 1709, II, pp. 480 ff. (pp. 483-4: presentation of the *Polyhistor philosophicus*; pp. 484-8: biography of Morhof); Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, chap. 30, § 3, p. 171; Stolle, pp. 37-9 and p. 137; AE, 1732, p. 467; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. I, p. xxxi n. 3; Orloff, p. 4.

On the significance of his work:

Sandys, Vol. II, pp. 365-6; Bernadini-Righi, pp. 114-16; I. Quiles, 'Contribución a la historiografía de la escolástica medieval de los siglos XVII y XVIII (el espíritu anti-escolástico de los primeros historiadores)', in *L'Homme et son destin d'après les penseurs du Moyen Age*, Actes du premier Congrès international de philosophie médiévale, Louvain-Bruxelles, 28 août-4 septembre 1958 (Louvain and Paris, 1960), pp. 733-4; Wilamowitz, p. 75; Braun, pp. 79-83; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 18 n. 24; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 123 n. 24; Del Torre, p. 38; Balsamo, pp. 99-100; I. M. Batafarano, 'Vico e Morhof: considerazioni e congetture', *Bolletino del Centro di studi vichiani*, Vol. IX (1979), pp. 89-110. On the cultural context of the early eighteenth century and Morhof in particular see C. Wiedemann, 'Polyhistor Glück und Ende: Von Daniel Georg Morhof zum jungen Lessing', in *Festschrift Gottfried Weber*, ed. Heinz Otto Burger and Claus von See (Bad Homburg, 1967), pp. 215-35.

2. THE PEDAGOGICAL TRADITION

2.1. Guillaume Morel (1505–1564)

David Chytrée (1530–1600)

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century an outline of a general history of philosophy was provided by two tables of philosophers' succession and schools. The authors of these were Guillaume Morel (Morellius) and David Chytrée (Chytraeus). Morel, born in 1505 and died in 1564, was a learned Parisian printer-publisher no less esteemed than the Estiennes, while Chytrée, who lived in Germany from 1530 to 1600, was a pupil of Melancthon and worked as a historian and theologian. It must have been the publication of the ancient classics of history of philosophy during the first half of the sixteenth century³ that led these authors to write rather simplified outlines of the history of the philosophers, possibly for didactic purposes.⁴

Morel's *Tabula compendiosa de origine, successione, aetate, et doctrina veterum philosophorum, ex Plutarcho, Laertio, Cicerone, et aliis eius generis scriptoribus collecta* followed the Patristic-Augustinian tradition and placed the origins of philosophical wisdom among the barbarians rather than the Greeks. According to him the Magi, the Chaldeans, the Gymnosophists, the Druids, the Semnotheans, the Egyptian priests, the Libyan Atlas, and the Thracian Zamolxis were the most ancient sages, and the Seven Wise Men and the first Greek poets, Musaeus and Linus, drew on the cultural heritage of the ancient Egyptians. The history of wisdom in the Western world then continued with Thales, "first of the Ionian philosophers" (p. 3),

³ The *editio princeps* of the Greek text of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Philosophers*, edited by Hieronymus Frobenius and Nicholas Episcopus, dates from 1533 (see below). The Greek text of Plutarch's *Moralia* appeared for the first time in Venice in 1509, edited by Aldus and Demetrius Ducas (printed by Aldus and Andrea da Asolo). The *editio princeps* of Plutarch's *Vitae* was edited by Filippo Giunta in Florence in 1517. Stobaeus was published by Vittore Trincavelli in Venice in 1535. In the middle of the century appeared Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* edited by Piero Vettori (see Sandys, Vol. II, pp. 104–5, 137).

⁴ Morel's table was in fact used by Hieronymus Wolf in a series of lectures around 1560. The table and the commentary were published by Wolf himself in 1580, together with David Chytrée's brief work, Desiderius Jacotius' *De philosophorum doctrina*, and other works useful for teaching philosophy to the young: *Tabula compendiosa de origine, successione, aetate, et doctrina veterum philosophorum, ex Plutarcho, Laertio, Cicerone, et aliis eius generis scriptoribus, a G. Morellio Tiliario collecta, cum Hier. Wolfii annotationibus*. . . , 496 pp. (Basle, 1580). This is the edition of both Morel and Chytrée referred to here. The *Tabulae* of these two authors and the collection of Ciceronian quotations by Jacotius were published again in the *Thesaurus Graecarum antiquitatum contextus et designatus ab Jacobo Gronovio*, Vol. x (Venice, 1735), coll. 301–46, 345–8, 351–92. The first edition of Morel's tables dates from 1547 according to the polyhistor Johann Jacob Fries (Frisius) in the preface to his *Bibliotheca philosophorum classicorum authorum* (see above): "I then found the table . . . compiled by the most learned G. Morellius Tiletanus . . . and published in Paris in 1547". We have found no copy of this first edition even in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Pythagoras, "first of the Italic philosophers" (p. 9), and their successors, for each of which Morel provided brief comments, including the characteristics of their thinking and the times in which they lived. As he declared in the title of the *Tabula*, the author always drew on Laertius, Cicero, and Plutarch. It is worth noting that apart from the two founders of the Ionian and Italic schools, Morel dealt fully only with Epicurus, with whom the study of philosophers concluded. After examining the principal theories of Epicurean thought, Morel concluded (alluding to the diffusion of Epicureanism in his own century):⁵ "This philosophy spread most widely through all centuries, but now it is almost the only philosophy present in the lives and minds of men, whether they proclaim and pretend otherwise. If this were not so there would not be such morals as we see" (p. 12).

Morel stated in conclusion, however, that the history of philosophy did not stop at this point. Whoever wished to know "the doctrines of the Hebrew sages, from which the Christian religion developed" (p. 13), must read the historian Flavius Josephus and the philosopher Philo; in addition he referred to Funck's *Chronologia* for information on the succession of the Church doctors and the various heresies which had developed over the centuries to his own day.⁶ Finally, in order to establish a survey of the entire course of human wisdom, the Latin philosophers and scholastics must be reviewed. These last observations widen the historical perspective of Morel's *Tabula*, a work dealing only with ancient philosophy, into one with a more ample historiographical dimension than Renaissance thinkers had been accustomed to.

Unlike Morel's work, David Chytrée's *Tabula philosophica: series philosophorum, et sectae eorum praecipuae: a Thalete et Socrate imprimis, usque ad Ciceronem deducta* assumed that the origins of philosophy lay with the Greeks rather than the barbarians. Referring explicitly only to Diogenes Laertius, he began with a standard twofold classification of Western philosophy into Ionian and Italic philosophy. There then followed, somewhat schematically, the chain of philosophers who succeeded Thales and Pythagoras, with brief remarks on their thought and their chronological place in history. The series of Epicurean philosophers also held a special place in Chytrée's *Tabula*, from their founder to Zeno and Phaedrus, "the two Epicureans who had influenced Cicero and Atticus" (p. 23) — another indication of the favour enjoyed by this movement in the sixteenth century.

⁵ For sixteenth-century Epicureanism, see 'L'Épicurisme au XVI^e siècle', in *Association Guillaume Budé: Actes du VIII^e Congrès* (Paris, 5-10 avril 1968) (Paris, 1969), pp. 639-727.

⁶ J. Funck, *Chronologia cum commentariis chronologicis ab initio mundi ad resurrectionem Christi* (Nuremberg, 1545; Königsberg, 1552; continued up to 1553, Basle, 1554; continued up to 1560, Wittenberg, 1570; continued by an anonymous writer up to 1578, Wittenberg, 1578 and 1601). See the entry 'Funck, Jean [= Johann]', in BUAM, Vol. xv, p. 200.

On Morel's life and works:

BUAM, Vol. xxix, pp. 272-3; Ph. Rénouard, *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens libraires, fondateurs de caractères et correcteurs d'imprimerie depuis l'introduction de l'imprimerie à Paris (1470) jusqu'à la fin du seizième siècle* . . . (Paris, 1965), pp. 314-15. On his activity as a printer, see Michel Maittaire, *Annales typographici ab anno 1536 ad annum 1557. Continuati: cum appendice*, Vol. III, pt. 1 (Amsterdam, 1726), pp. 429-34; in the same work (pp. 435-51) is listed the catalogue of works printed by Morel at his printing works: 'Typographici librorum index in omni disciplinarum genere, quos Guil. Morelius e sua officina suppeditare studiosis possit: primum quos ille typis cudit'.

Morel and his work are mentioned in:

Struve, Vol. 1, chap. 3, § 1, p. 152; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 439-49; Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 34; Vol. VI, p. 24; Tennemann, Vol. 1, p. 420.

On the significance of Morel's work:

Jasenas, p. 20; Braun, pp. 56-7 and n. 24; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 13 n. 19; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 118 n. 2; Del Torre, p. 10.

On the life and works of David Chytrée:

Adam, [1], pp. 323-30; Freher, Vol. 1, pp. 314-15; Jöcher, Vol. 1, coll. 1906-7; BUAM, Vol. VIII, p. 269; ADB, Vol. IV, pp. 254-6; NDB, Vol. III, p. 254. We mention, finally, two biographies, one the work of his son Ulrico (Rostock, 1601), the other by O. F. Schütz, *De vita Davidis Chytræi theologi historici et polystoris Rostochiensis* . . . , 4 vols. (Hamburg, 1720-22).

On the reception:

Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 152; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 440-41; Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 34; Vol. VI, p. 24; Tennemann, Vol. 1, p. 420.

On the significance of his work:

Braun, p. 57; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 118 n. 2.

A bibliographical notice should be given of Desiderius Jacotius, author of *De philosophorum doctrina libellus ex Cicerone* (Lyons, 1556), a collection of passages taken from Ciceronian works. Its publication was often linked with the *Tabulae* by Morel and Chytrée. These three works were published together not only by Hieronymus Wolf in 1580, but also by Jacob Gronovius in Vol. x of his *Thesaurus Graecarum antiquitatum* (see above, n. 4).

For some bio-bibliographical remarks on Jacotius see:

Jöcher, II, col. 1827.

On the reception see:

Struve, Vol. 1, chap. 3, § 1, p. 152; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 447-8.

On the significance of his work:

Braun, p. 57.

Jacotius was also important for the history of medicine as the editor of Hippocrates' *Coan Prognostics* (cf. *Bibliotheca Walleriana: The Books Illustrating the History of Medicine and*

Science, Collected by Dr. E. Waller and Bequeathed to the Library of the Royal University of Uppsala. A Catalogue, compiled by H. Sallander (Stockholm, 1955), Vol. 1, s.v. 'Hippocrates', p. 210 n. 4584). However his name is found more frequently in the publishing history of Cicero, of whom Jacotius was a passionate student and popularizer.

2.2. Luigi Pesaro (1541–1586)

Among the first Italian historians of philosophy to be recorded by Appiano Buonafede was the Venetian Luigi Pesaro (Pisaurius), who was also referred to in the writings of Heumann and Brucker.

The Venetian patrician Luigi Pesaro was born in 1541 and died in 1586. He received his doctorate in Padua where he was taught by Francesco Piccolomini and Giacomo Zabarella, working for many years as public lecturer of philosophy at the Rialto School in Venice. As a young man he wrote the work for which he is still remembered: *De priscorum sapientum placitis, ac optimo philosophandi genere, sententiae et theoremata varia, ad ingenuas disciplinas pertinentia, ab Aloysio Pisaurio Marini filio patritio Veneto proposita, cum Patavii tum Venetiis publico congressu ad veritatis gloriam inter viros ingenuos discutienda* (Padua, 1567). The work is quite short: the subject matter is covered in 364 brief paragraphs on 48 medium-sized folios. Following Diogenes Laertius, Pesaro summarized the *placita* of the ancients, grouping them according to schools of philosophical thought. He disagreed with Laertius, as did his teacher Piccolomini (*Unversa philosophia de moribus* (Venice, 1583), v, 22, p. 270), and placed the barbarian origins of philosophy among the Persian Magi, the Indian Gymnosophists, the Egyptians, the Armenians, the Babylonians, and the Assyrians. But Pesaro intentionally dealt only with the post-Socratic schools, as none of the earlier Eastern philosophers' writings had been preserved nor had those of the earliest Greek thinkers. These post-Socratic schools are fairly consistently arranged and discussed in pairs of opposites: the Epicureans and the Cynics, the Cyrenaics and the Stoics, the Sceptics and the followers of Heraclitus. After a very brief treatment of these sects, there followed a broader discussion of the *placita* of the Academy (Plato in particular, excluding both the 'foreign' academies and the Neoplatonists) and a very long discussion about the Peripatetic sect, which represented the "best kind of philosophizing".

The purpose of Pesaro's work was a scholastic and pedagogical one. He followed an explicitly eclectic path: "I chose from the individual [philosophers] what I thought could be approved of, and I neglected and omitted what seemed less acceptable. . . . a liberal mind may dwell upon all schools of most ancient wisdom (*in omnibus priscorum sapientum scholis, posse ingenuum animum commorari*) and recognize true things there" (Dedication to Daniele Barbaro, Patriarch of Aquileia, fol. [1]^v); elsewhere he stated that he wrote "for the instruction of a liberal mind (*ad institutionem ingenui animi*)" (§ 63). This educational purpose governed the way the *placita* were arranged under each sect, placing first those listed under *pro* (which he approved of) and then those under *adversus* (which he criticized and rejected).

For political and religious reasons, he approved the dogmatic Academic

thinking of Plato above all, since it showed “a useful path towards God and the Republic” (§ 43). The Peripatetics, on the other hand, represented the highest peak the human mind could reach through its own natural forces. The Aristotelianism expounded by Pesaro was the systematic Aristotelianism of the schools, which he modified with certain methods adopted from the teachers of the Paduan studio; in fact, some of the theories he used can be attributed to the influence of Averroism or of Simplicius. He believed that the Peripatetics could not be accepted in their entirety; indeed, many of their doctrines had to be rejected, and in particular the one which assigned “one intelligence . . . to the human sphere” (§ 358). According to him the Peripatetics believed that such an intelligence in man did not reside properly in the soul, but linked itself to the soul only by means of the imagination; this he criticized because in this theory the Peripatetics did not distinguish men from beasts (§§ 358–61). According to his view, history of philosophy revealed the ultimate limitations of philosophy because it was above the ability of human reason, and as a result prepared the way for the “true light” (*lux vera*) of Christian revelation.

This religious conclusion, as well as the marked prominence given to ethical *placita*, and above all the explanation of the Peripatetics’ “civil discipline”, are a further evidence of the pedagogical and political intentions of the Venetian patrician Pesaro, to whom the Senate had entrusted the education of the young Venetian noblemen attending the school of philosophy at the Rialto.

On the life:

M. Barbaro, ‘Arbori de’ patritii veneti’, Archivio di Stato di Venezia, MS, Vol. vi, p. 85; N. Crasso, *Pisaura gens* (Venice, 1652), pp. 73–6; G. Zabarella, *Il Carosio ovvero origine regia et augusta della serenissima famiglia Pesari di Venetia* (Padua, 1659), pp. 17, 60–61.

On the reception:

Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 153; Heumann, Vol. II, pp. 635–7; Brucker, Vol. 1, pp. 34–5; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. 1, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii; Orloff, p. 23.

On the significance of his work:

Braun, p. 57; Malusa, ‘Origini’, p. 13 n. 19; Malusa, ‘Interpretazione’, p. 118 n. 2; G. Santinello, ‘Il “De priscorum sapientum placitis” di Luigi Pesaro’, in *Medioevo e Rinascimento veneto con altri studi in onore di Lino Lazzarini*, Vol. 11: *Dal Cinquecento al Novecento* (Padua, 1979), pp. 181–202.

On the Rialto school:

B. Nardi, ‘La scuola di Rialto e l’Umanesimo veneziano’, in *Umanesimo europeo e Umanesimo veneziano* (Florence, 1964), pp. 93–139; J. B. Ross, ‘Venetian Schools and Teachers Fourteenth to Early Sixteenth Century’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, xxix (1976), pp. 521–66.

On the Piccolomini school:

E. Garin, *Scienza e vita civile nel Rinascimento italiano* (Bari, 1965), pp. 123, 141 n. 16, 159.

2.3. Francisco de Toledo (1532–1596)

The Jesuit cardinal Francisco de Toledo (Tolet, Toletanus), born in Córdoba 4 October 1532, died in Rome 14 September 1596, was a theologian, but above all a philosopher, whose major accomplishment was a vast body of work of exegesis and commentary on Aristotle's books.

This author is included here because some of his short chapters ('Praefatio', chs. 1–6, fols. 1^r–4^r) dealt specifically with the birth and historical origins of philosophy. These form the introduction to the *Commentaria una cum Quaestionibus in octo libros Aristoteliae De Physica auscultatione* (Venice, 1580; first edition, Venice, 1573). In these chapters the author did not establish a history of cosmological thought, as the Aristotelians of the Cinquecento habitually had done at the beginning of their treatises on physics (see Francesco Piccolomini and Benito Pereyra), but instead Toledo opened his commentary with a discussion of the name *Philosophia* (ch. 1, fol. 1^r^v), the parts of philosophy, (chs. 2–3, fols. 1^r–3^r), its origins (ch. 4, 'De ortu, seu inventione Philosophiae, ac primo de eius inventionis modo', fol. 3^r^v), the inventors of philosophy (ch. 5, 'De philosophiae inventoribus', fols. 3^r–4^r), and finally, its utility and dignity (ch. 6, 'De utilitate et dignitate Philosophiae', fol. 4^r).

"Once philosophy was called *sophia*, that is, wisdom (*id est sapientia*), and the philosophers were named *sophoi*, or wise men (*id est sapientes*)": the author opened his explanation by referring explicitly to Bk. 1 of Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum* where Pythagoras was said to be the first to call wisdom by the name of *philosophia*. Since he identified philosophy with wisdom, philosophy was not to be considered a particular science ("Nor is it appropriate to consider philosophy to be a separate science (*Nec oportet existimare, Philosophiam aliquam esse peculiarem scientiam*)", fol. 1^r). Rather it was almost an *universale genus*, "containing the various sciences within itself" (*ibid.*). We shall not deal with Toledo's study of the way philosophy described itself, nor with his treatment of the various methods by which it could be approached (ch. 4), but will concentrate instead on the more historiographical theses put forward in ch. 5, which were devoted to the *inventores* of philosophy. According to Toledo, the *inventores* of philosophy were the barbarian peoples and not the Greeks, for in the history of mankind, the most ancient wisdom was found to have started with Adam, the first man; it was passed on to Noah, "who taught the Armenians" (fol. 4^r), and to the Patriarchs who emigrated to Egypt. It then came to the Greeks, who had gone to that country "in order to learn" (*ibid.*), as Diogenes Laertius attested in Bk. VII of his work. The author concluded: "Thus science had its origin with the Hebrews and Chaldeans, as Josephus states in *Contra Apionem*, and Eusebius in Bk. 10 of *De praeparatione Evangelica*, and Berossus in Bk. 3" (*ibid.*).

Greek philosophy had a different historical development. The Greek Zeno was the inventor of dialectics, a discipline later to be perfected by

Plato; ethics, on the other hand, were introduced by Socrates; physics by Thales, the first of the Seven Wise Men and founder of the Ionian school; and Pythagoras, the founder of the Italic school, developed physics further. Thales was followed by the philosophers Anaximander, Anaxagoras, Socrates (the latter's pupils were Plato and Antisthenes), and the leaders of the Stoics (Toledo mentions only Zeno and Chrysippus). Plato was the founder of the Academic school, and his most important followers were Xenocrates and Aristotle, the founder of the *Peripatos*. Thus, according to Toledo, three philosophical sects were derived from Thales: the Stoic, the Academic, and the Peripatetic. Other thinkers took Pythagoras as their starting point: Xenophanes, Parmenides, Xenocrates, Leucippus, and Epicurus, the founder of a new intellectual direction that took its name from him. In short, "there were four sects of philosophers. They differed not only in their names, but also in many sayings (*multi placites*) and opinions (*opinionones differentes*), yet they all started among the Greeks" (fol. 3^v).

On the life and works:

Freher, Vol. I, pp. 58–9; BUAM, Vol. XL, pp. 643–4; Hurter, Vol. III, coll. 247–56 (nn. 108–9); Sommervogel, Vol. VIII, coll. 64–82; DThC, Vol. XV, coll. 1223–5 (with bibliography); EC, Vol. XII, coll. 196–8 (with bibliography); EF, Vol. VI, coll. 497–8 (with bibliography).

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, I, chap. II, § 21, p. 60; Buonafede, *Della restaurazione*, I, p. 59.

On the significance of Toledo's work:

C. Giacon, *La Seconda Scolastica: Precedenze teoretiche ai problemi giuridici. Toledo, Pereira, Fonseca, Molina, Suarez* (Milan, 1946), pp. 31–66; GAF, Vol. IX, pp. 2045–7, 2060–61 (bibliography), 2089–91 (texts); C. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 21, 147.

2.4. Benito Pereyra (c.1535–1610)

The 'De antiquis philosophis, eorumque variis, circa rerum naturalium principia, opinionibus' by the Spanish Jesuit Benito Pereyra (Pereira, Perera, Pererius), teacher of rhetoric, philosophy, theology, and Holy Scripture at the Collegio Romano, makes up Bk. IV (pp. 112–64) of *De Communibus omnium rerum naturalium principijs et affectionibus libri quindecim. Qui plurimum conferunt, ad eos octo libros Aristotelis, qui de Physico auditu inscribuntur, intelligendos* . . . (Rome, 1576). A compendium of the history of ancient philosophy, especially concerned with the problem of cosmology, it is part of a commentary on the eight books of Aristotle's *Physics*, which was a general introduction to the teaching of natural philosophy:

We judged it most pleasant and useful to our readers first to deal carefully and accurately with almost all the opinions (*opinionēs*) which were once held among the ancient philosophers concerning the principles of natural things (*naturalium principiorum doctrinae*), and to record and illustrate them (*ante oculos ponentes*), before discussing the true (*vera*) and Aristotelian doctrine of natural principles (p. 112).

According to Pereyra there are many reasons why it is useful to know the various opinions held by philosophers: first, this knowledge makes it possible to discourse widely on any topic ("to provide great force (*magnam vim*) and abundance (*copiam*) in the discussion of any given subject in plausible terms (*probabiliter de omni re proposita*)", p. 112); secondly, the various opinions and solutions that have been given by past philosophers about particular problems induce a sense of caution in the philosopher ("They make us doubt (*dubitare*) and heighten our awareness of the difficulties hidden therein (*quae in ea re latent*)", *ibid.*); again, the comparison of the various opinions allows the contemporary philosopher to assess the positive and negative aspects of philosophical doctrines and theories ("We easily recognize what we must accept and follow (*quid in illis probandum est, et sequendum*), and equally what we must avoid and refute (*quid item fugiendum et reiiciendum sit*)", p. 113). On the other hand, in Pereyra's opinion, it is the philosopher's duty "to distinguish and separate true opinions from false ones, to condemn the latter, and endorse the former" (*ibid.*). The author concluded that "the truth of our thought reveals itself more firmly and clearly" (*ibid.*) through the discussion and refutation of other philosophers' opinions. Thus, the history of philosophy, for Pereyra, contained the necessary preparatory information for theoretical thinking and had a primarily propaedeutical function for establishing truth.

After these preliminary methodological observations Pereyra outlined his history of ancient philosophy using as his guides Diogenes Laertius, Aristotle, and St Augustine, whose *De civitate Dei* was a great inspiration. There had been three principal philosophical sects — the Ionic, the Italic, and the Eleatic — but after Plato's death, philosophy divided "into four famous disciplines and sects" (p. 114): the Academics, Peripatetics, Stoics, and Epicureans. It is obvious that Pereyra combined Laertius' outline of two great ancient philosophical traditions with the so-called Ciceronian model, which included four principal philosophical schools, revealing the influence of similar attempts made in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. As he explained it, the Academic school underwent a complex development; as a result, it was common for historians to distinguish between an Ancient Academy (with Plato and his immediate followers to Crantor and Crates), the Middle Academy founded by Arcesilaus, and a New Academy founded by Lacydes. The Peripatetic school underwent an even greater development

than that of Plato's, extending in an uninterrupted succession of philosophers who reinterpreted Aristotle's thought, beginning with Theophrastus (Aristotle's disciple, who succeeded him in his teaching position), to Averroës, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas. By comparison, the historical developments of the Stoic and Epicurean sects were of more limited duration. In addition to the well-known exponents of the former sect, Pereyra, following Cicero, included Boethus ("A certain Boëtus is referred to as a Stoic", p. 115), who was probably the pupil of Diogenes of Seleucia in the second century B.C. Among the Epicureans Pereyra mentioned Lucretius, "who studiously explained all of Epicurus' physiology in Latin verse" (p. 115).

Pereyra held that the history of philosophy as portrayed in Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum* was not broad enough. For wisdom more ancient than the Greeks' existed among the so-called barbarian peoples: "Philosophy did not flourish among the Greeks only, but also among the barbarians, and furthermore it flourished there much earlier and in a much purer form (*multo prius et purius*)" (p. 116). He validated this view by noting that it had been held by Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Porphyry, Clearchus the Peripatetic, Flavius Josephus, Justin Martyr, Cyril, and Theodoret, and by Diogenes Laertius himself, who made a statement to this effect in the preface to his work. Orpheus was Thracian, Thales Phoenician, Mercurius Egyptian, Zoroaster Persian, Atlas Libyan or Phrygian, Anacharsis Scythian, Pherecydes Syrian. There were sages among all the most ancient peoples: the Druids among the Gauls, the magistrates among the Hispanics, the priests among the Egyptians, the Chaldeans among the Babylonians, the Magi among the Persians, the Gymnosophists among the Indians, the Prophets among the Hebrews. He noted that only two authors upheld the hypothesis of the Greek origin of philosophy: Diodorus Siculus ("he regards the barbarians as not more ancient than the Greeks", p. 116) and Epicurus, who made the untenable assertion that "no-body other than the Greeks is apt to philosophize" (ibid.).

Pereyra observed that the sects got their names (according to Diogenes Laertius) either from the name of their founder or from the place where he was born, from the place where the disciples would assemble to philosophize, from one of their characteristic modes of behaviour, from the kind of life they lived, or, lastly, from their thought.

After this general introduction to the history of ancient philosophy (pp. 113-16) Pereyra discussed the lives and thought of twelve of the most famous philosophers (pp. 116-32): Thales, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Democritus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and Zeno of Citium. Since Pereyra himself was a Peripatetic, he devoted the most space (pp. 128-31) to Aristotle, the philosopher *par excellence*, not only because of the importance of his writings and thought,

but also because of the influence he exerted and the subsequent development of his philosophy during the following centuries.

At this point Pereyra's *historia philosophica* restricted itself solely to the problem of cosmology. Like Piccolomini before him, he took up the table of 'principles' (*principia*) of the first book of Aristotle's *Physics* and opened his discussion of the history of ancient cosmology with the following summary:

Some do not seem to recognize any principle, namely those writers who say that all is one immobile being (*unum ens immobile*). Others do, but they assume either one or many [principles] (*vel unum, vel multa*); if one is assumed, it may be of finite or infinite magnitude, and may furthermore consist of four elements, or it may precede these elements or be their medium; in a similar way, those who assume many principles either state that their number is finite or that it is infinite; if they are assumed to be finite, their number may be two, three, four, ten, or any other specific number; if they are assumed to be infinite, they may be believed to be all of the same kind and of the same nature, or of different and contrary species (p. 132).

The author then made a long digression from this table of *principia* to ancient cosmology (pp. 132-63), and analysed the puzzling variety of opinions and "enormous disagreements of the philosophers concerning the most important questions of philosophy" (p. 145). This line of reasoning became the starting point of an apologia about truth in philosophy: it resides with the Christians and not with pagan philosophers, since the latter disagree with one another not only over physical questions, but also about the much more important issues of natural theology, ethics, anthropology, and psychology. None of the Greek thinkers, with the exception of Plato, had a clear understanding of prime matter; few thinkers succeeded in formulating the concept of efficient cause; lastly, almost nobody understood the concepts of 'end' and 'good' (p. 163).

On the life and works:

Hurter, Vol. III, coll. 469-73 (n. 201); Sommervogel, Vol. VI, coll. 499-507; DThC, Vol. XII/1, col. 1217; *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada Europea-Americana*, Vol. XLIII (Madrid, 1921), p. 640; EC, Vol. IX, coll. 1170-71; EF, IV, coll. 1485-6 (with bibliography); C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 313-20.

On the reception:

Struve, Vol. I, chap. 5, § 3, p. 332; Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. I, chap. 1, § 7, p. 5; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 26, §16, p. 148.

On the significance of Pereyra's work:

C. Giacon, *La Seconda Scolastica: Precedenze teoretiche ai problemi giuridici*. Toledo, Pereira, Fonseca, Molina, Suarez (Milan, 1946), pp. 31-66; GAF, Vol. IX, pp. 2045-7, 2060-61 (bibliography), pp. 2092-4 (texts); P. Di Vona, *Studi sulla Scolastica della Controriforma. L'esistenza e la sua distinzione metafisica dall'essenza* (Florence, 1968),

pp. 13–16; Braun, p. 369; Del Torre, p. 29 n. 67; C. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 52, 144.

2.5. Johann Friedrich Schröter (1559–1625)

The German physician Johann Friedrich Schröter (Schröterus) studied in Padua, where according to his own testimony he attended Francesco Piccolomini's lectures. As an appendix to his *Commentaria in librum Hippocratis Περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρώπου* (Jena, 1585) he published two *Digressiones*. The first of these, the 'Digressio de praecipuis autoribus et de propagatione Philosophiae' (fols. [92]^v–[98]^r), consists of a general survey of the history of wisdom and philosophy. The author concentrated on the philosophical schools, the succession of the philosophers, and the continuity of the propagation of wisdom from Adam to the Aristotelian commentators of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Prior to the Greeks, he declared, there is no information about philosophical schools or a succession of philosophers. Only starting with the Greeks can a continuous line of propagation and historical development of philosophy be traced. Apart from the prominent place given to Aristotle, Schröter's account followed Diogenes Laertius. He stated that the spread of arts and sciences throughout the Latin and Arab Middle Ages and up to the author's own lifetime had been due principally to the school of Aristotle.

Schröter emphasized the theory of the non-Greek origins of philosophy, as well as the theme of an uninterrupted sequence of philosophical wisdom throughout the centuries: "One must assume that the barbarians, Hebrews, and Egyptians refined wisdom much earlier (*longe prius sapientiam excoluisse*)" (fol. 92^v). He held that wisdom started with Adam, the primogenitor. He followed the Bible, tracing the transmission of wisdom through Seth, the Giants, Enoch, Noah, Ham's descendants, Abraham, and Moses. He attributed a special privilege to the Hebrews and Egyptians, from whom the first philosophical sect of priests derived. All of these statements betray the author's apologetic-religious intentions and tacit polemic against the theory of the classicists. He reasoned from the age of a people; thus, since both the Hebrew and Egyptian civilizations are more ancient than the Greek, wisdom must have been born among them. He noted that statements to this effect had even been found in the works of the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle (*Timaeus* 21–2, *Metaphysics* A.1. 981b 23; *De caelo*, B.12. 292a 8); and in recent times the same theory had been defended by his venerated teacher Francesco Piccolomini, in his *Moralis philosophiae* (or *Universa philosophia de moribus* (Venice, 1583)) Vol. v, p. 22.

The second dissertation, 'De illustrioribus circa generationis principia an-

tiquorum philosophorum ante Aristotelem opinionibus' (fols. [98]^v–[125]^r), is not properly speaking a general history of wisdom and philosophy like the previous work, but a history of pre-Socratic physics in the tradition of the first book of Aristotle's *Physics*, and it is influenced by commentaries on this work. Bessarion and Simplicius are notable influences, the latter's commentary being the most popular work on the *Physics* in Padua during the second half of the sixteenth century. The *Digressio* contains a systematic, theoretical section (fols. [98]^v–[108]^r) in which the author discusses the table of 'principles' of physics derived from Aristotle's *Physics* (these should not be confused with 'elements': for the ancient philosophers before Aristotle there existed only 'principles'). This theoretical section was followed by a historical discussion (fols. [108]^r–[125]^r) in which he presented the ancient philosophers in chronological order, rather than according to the systematic table as he had done previously: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Pythagoras (with a digression on Plato), Empedocles, Democritus, Leucippus, Epicurus and Anaxagoras. The author concluded his survey with those thinkers who, according to Aristotle's classification, held that principles were "partly one (*partim unum*) and partly several (*partim plura*)", thus returning to Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, and Anaximander.

For bibliographical notes:

Adam, [III], p. 144; Freher, Vol. II, p. 1352; Jöcher, Vol. IV, coll. 361–2; Hirsch, Vol. V, p. 145. His studies at Padua are documented not only by the autobiographical evidence presented in the first *Digressio* (fol. [95]^r), but also by his subscription in the matriculation register of the German nation at the Paduan Athenaeum: "Ioannes Fridericus Schröterus Ienensis 21 octobris 1577. Philosophus, medicus et iuris utriusque doctor legit medicinam. Nunc physicus Budissinus. Inde iurisprudentiae incumbit" (ancient Archive of the University of Padua, MS 465, fol. 20^r).

2.6. Francesco Piccolomini (1520–1604)

Among the many works written by the Aristotelian Francesco Piccolomini of Siena, professor of metaphysics at the University of Padua from 1561 to 1601, are several on the history of philosophy.

The first work that should be mentioned is *De rerum definitionibus liber unus* (Venice, 1600). This is a kind of philosophical dictionary, which is at the same time a manual of the history of philosophy, in which the author reconstructs Aristotle's thought following Thomas Aquinas. However, although this work is undoubtedly one of his most mature efforts, Francesco Piccolomini is included in this survey not because of it, but because of the brief syntheses of history of philosophy with which he systematically introduced his theoretical writings. Aristotle had set the pattern for such introductions, and medieval and modern Aristotelians followed his example. The *De philosophorum placitis in attinentibus ad interna principia generationis rerum natura constantium liber unus* is a typical

example of this kind of historiography of philosophy: Piccolomini wrote it as a foreword to his *Libri ad scientiam de natura attinentes* (Venice, 1596; fols. 28^r–45^v).

In the 'Proemium' the author gives a number of reasons both for teachers and students for the great "usefulness of knowing various opinions". For a teacher, knowledge of various philosophers' opinions was not only a sign of erudition and culture, but also it helped him to arrive at correct critical evaluations of philosophical problems. Moreover, a discussion of the different opinions made his teaching more varied and interesting and provided supporting evidence for the theory he was endorsing:

For it is certainly useful . . . for a teacher. It allows him to appear more erudite, and more experienced in his subject; furthermore, it enables him to understand the circumstances of his subject more deeply (*intimius*) and precisely (*exactius*), and to expound (*elucidare*) it more meticulously (*exquisitius*); thirdly, it permits him to consider adverse opinions and to judge them more correctly; in addition, it lets him appear to be guided and influenced solely by reason (*ratio*) and not by emotions (*insuper ne ulla animi affactione*); it is useful also for a fifth reason: it allows him to explain his own teaching more firmly, for the destruction of a contrary opinion serves as added proof of one's own (*est comprobatio propriae*); lastly, it makes him appear more copious, with more principles and reasons shedding light on the subject at his command, so that he provides both more pleasure and greater benefit through this variety (fol. 28^v).

To a listener, a survey of philosophers' statements on a particular question was also important because it induced a greater critical awareness in the search for truth, which was the primary goal of all studies:

It is useful for the listener: his mind is stimulated to analyse various questions so that he can contemplate truth more clearly (*pro distinctiore veri inspectione*), his mind is cleared of falsehood (*ut purgetur eius animus a mendacio*), he believes his teacher more persistently and firmly, he becomes more skilled (*eruditior*) in listening to the various opinions (*varias audiens opiniones*), his mind finds greater satisfaction (*acquiescat*) in endorsing teachings closer to truth, and finally, he can freely decide (*ut libere valeat*) which opinion he wants to side with (*cui voluerit parti adhaerere*) (fol. 28^v).

After these preliminary remarks, Piccolomini followed the first book of Aristotle's *Physics* with a systematic table of principles (*principia*) with their traditional subdivision: "Principles are either one, or several, or partly one and partly several" (fol. 29^r). With different distinctions and gradations, the existence of one single principle is affirmed by Thales, Hippocrates, Hippias, Anaximenes, Diogenes, Hesiodus, Heraclitus, and Zeno; while Aristotle,

Plato, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Boethus, and Parmenides maintained that several principles existed. Finally, the opinion that the principles are "partly one and partly several" was held by Anaximander, Empedocles, Parmenides, Zeno, and Anaxagoras. Piccolomini thus presented the entire history of ancient, and in part that of medieval philosophy from the point of view of cosmology — the problem around which the whole of his subsequent treatise would revolve.

On the life and works:

Imperiali, pp. 114–15; Freher, Vol. II, p. 1498; Nicéron, Vol. xxiii, pp. 68–73; BUAM, Vol. xxxiii, p. 191; EF, Vol. IV, coll. 1578–9 (with bibliography); C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 331–42.

On the reception:

Struve, Vol. I, chap. 5, § II, p. 376; Buonafede, *Della restaurazione*, Vol. I, pp. 114–15.

On the significance of his work:

P. Ragnisco, 'La polemica tra Francesco Piccolomini e Giacomo Zabarella nell'Università di Padova', in *Atti del R. Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ser. 6, Vol. IV (1885–6), pp. 1217–52; E. Garin, *Scienza e vita civile nel Rinascimento italiano* (Bari, 1965), pp. 123, 141 n. 16; p. 160 (Universale laterza, 21); Garin, Vol. II, pp. 656–61, 712 (bibliography); L. Malusa, *Dall'Umanesimo alla Controriforma* (Storia del pensiero occidentale, 3; Milan, 1975), p. 251; N. Badaloni, 'Il Cinquecento', in *Storia della filosofia*, ed. M. Dal Pra (Milan, 1976), Vol. VII, pp. 279, 852 (bibliography: sources), 854 (bibliography: studies); A. Poppi, 'Il problema della filosofia morale nella Scuola padovana del Rinascimento: platonismo e aristotelismo nella definizione del metodo dell'etica', in *Platon et Aristote à la Renaissance. XVI^{ième} Colloque international de Tours* (Paris, 1976), pp. 105–46 (particularly pp. III, 114–15, 119–22, 124–32); C. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 102, 144.

2.7. Ludovico Carboni da Costacciaro (d. 1597)

The theory of the non-Greek origins of philosophy was defended more fully and systematically, and not without an explicitly apologetic Counter-Reformist emphasis, in the works of the Italian Ludovico Carboni (Carbone, Carbo, Carbonius) of Costacciaro (Umbria). Carboni worked as professor of theology at the University of Perugia from 1570 and died in 1597.

Among Carboni's many works, all dealing with theology and philosophy, we find an introduction to philosophy in four books, described on the title page as *Introductionis in universam philosophiam libri quattuor: in quibus philosophiae humanaeque scientiae ortus, natura, partes, et attributa, multorumque philosophorum scholae, ac errata explicantur, atque recta philosophandi ratio docetur: Ludovici Carbonis a Costacciaro, Academici Parthenij, et sacrae theologiae almo Gymnasio Perusino olim publici Magistri: cum duplici indice. Quibus accessit Catalogus amplissimus expositorum omnium librorum philosophiae Aristotelis, aliorumque Scriptorum de rebus ad universam philosophiam pertinentibus*, 472 pp. (Venice, 1099

[*recte* 1599]).⁷ Two sections of this book are particularly relevant to the historian of philosophy: Bk. 1, ch. 7 (pp. 23–32), ‘De philosophiae ortu atque origine’, and the whole of Bk. III (pp. 333–418), ‘In quo de praecipuis philosophorum scholis, atque philosophiae magistris agitur’.

Concerning the origins of philosophy, he compared the theory that Greece was “not only a promoter of philosophy but also its creator (*auctrix*)” (p. 24) with the alternative theory that “philosophy first existed among the barbarians” (p. 24). He referred to similar debates already held, not only in antiquity (Clement of Alexandria, Cicero, Tertullian, Cyril, Theodoret, Eusebius, Flavius Josephus), but also in modern times (Francesco Patrizi, Annio of Viterbo, Francesco Giorgio Veneto (Zorzi), Agostino Steuco). He then proceeds, in a clear, scholastic manner, to express his opinions on the origins of philosophy in a series of theses. The barbarians were the first philosophers and the Greeks learned philosophy “from outsiders (*ab externis*)”, that is from the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Hebrews. But the philosophers who came closest to truth were instructed by Divine revelation: God taught Adam philosophy, the arts, and the various disciplines, and Adam transmitted them to his descendants. The Greeks did not always receive the wisdom of the ancient peoples in a pure fashion; nevertheless they were very important to philosophy, for they refined it in a more articulate way and spread it among the other peoples of the classical world.

These are the principal theories advanced by Ludovico Carboni, based “on the authority of the Greeks themselves” (p. 24), Plato, Aristotle, Porphyry, and Diodorus Siculus, and confirmed “on the authority of our own (*auctoritate nostrorum*)” (p. 25), that is, the Fathers of the Church and Christian writers from Justin Martyr to Clement of Alexandria, Cyril, and Theodoret. Not only did these authorities’ arguments provide evidence for the barbarian beginnings of philosophy, there also existed irrefutable historical proof — the sages were mostly barbarians. The first human beings after the Flood lived in Mesopotamia and Chaldea. The Greek philosophers had contacts with other peoples and their writings reveal the influence of Hebrew and Egyptian wisdom: “if we believe the Pythagorean Numenius and Justin Martyr, Plato is nothing but Moses debating in Greek (*Moses attice disserens*)” (p. 27).

The last part of Bk. 1, ch. 7, on the origins of philosophy and wisdom, reveals the apologetic preoccupations and religious aims behind Carboni’s *Introductio*: “I hope that as the result of our disputation it emerges that God must be acknowledged as the author of such a good, that is, of wisdom” (p. 31). God revealed wisdom to Adam, and transmitted it again through

⁷ This work is quite rare. A search of the principal libraries of Italy suggests that only two copies of this book exist, one in the Library of the Archiginnasio in Bologna, the other in the Biblioteca Nazionale of Palermo. It does not appear in the catalogues of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris nor the British Library in London.

the Holy Scriptures. There was no wisdom other than that described at the beginning of Ecclesiasticus: "All wisdom comes from the Lord God" (Ecclus. 1:1). When this divine wisdom was obscured among humans, they "began to philosophize" (p. 32) with the help of reason alone, even though "with regard to eternal and divine things reason is like the eye of the night owl in relation to the light of the sun (*atque noctuae oculus ad lumen solis habet*)" (p. 32), as Aristotle stated in the famous opening to his *Metaphysics*. According to Carboni the original "good philosophy" was preserved for a long time by several of the peoples, in spite of the fact that sin had clouded the human intelligence and soul. This was confirmed by the book of Job, the most ancient book still in existence.

The arguments Carboni provided in support of the barbarian, and especially biblical and Hebrew, origins of philosophy reveal the influence of sixteenth-century Platonism. He adopted the characteristic theme that eternal light in the human soul was fully revealed in Adam, but then obscured by the Fall. Carboni's *bona philosophia* was undoubtedly akin to Ficino's *pia philosophia* and Steuco's *perennis philosophia*, but Carboni was conscious that a human being could never attain the heights of the original wisdom given to the primogenitors by God.

These general historiographical theses in Bk. 1, ch. 7, reappear in Bk. III, which is entirely dedicated to the history of philosophy. It is, as we have said, a lengthy digression that Carboni considered necessary to the teaching of philosophy. He opened this book with a list of authors and general works which he recommended for further study of the history of philosophy, and which he himself drew from in great detail, as he had done before. These are Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum*, Cicero's *De finibus* and *Disputationes academicae*, Eusebius of Caesarea's *De praeparatione evangelica*, Clement of Alexandria's *Stomata*, Cyril's *Contra Iulianum*, Theodoret's *De curandis graecanicis affectionibus*, Plutarch's *De placitis philosophorum*, Bk. VIII of Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, Giovanfrancesco Pico's *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium*, Eunapius, and Francesco Giorgio Veneto's *Cantiche*.

Carboni's history of philosophy is not a simple imitation of Laertius or any other example of ancient historiography. Much fuller than those of Morel and Chytrée, it is no longer a simple chronological table, nor is it a catalogue of philosophers as compiled by the polyhistorians in the tradition of Gesner and Fries. Carboni's text has a complex structure, and reveals a continuity of philosophical thought in its historical development.

In spite of his belief in the non-Greek origins of philosophy, his history begins with Thales and Pythagoras (the Ionic and Italic schools) and he went on to examine their principal successors originating from the two schools and the different currents which emerged during their historical development: the Academics, Peripatetics, Stoics, and Epicureans. He spent a long time on Plato and Aristotle, the founders of the first two movements, with an exposition of their lives and works and a long critical analysis of their

thought presented in the form of theses, following the form of the Scholastics. Although Carboni maintained that immediate credence should not be given to anybody condemning either Plato or Aristotle, he equally believed, following the assumptions of the Counter-Reformation, that it was possible to distinguish between truth and falsehood in their works. According to him, some Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines are harmful to the intellectual formation and pure habits of young students of philosophy. Other Platonic doctrines, however, could inspire modesty, piety, and temperance, while Aristotle's could be beneficial to scientific education. All things considered, he preferred Aristotle to Plato, "since only he, of all those whose writings we still have, transmitted almost all parts of human wisdom more absolutely and with greater order (*magis absolute et ordinate*) than Plato had done" (p. 366). He also says of Aristotle: "In human philosophy, since we have no one better, he must be accepted as a teacher (*magister*) and preferred to the others" (p. 378).

Criticism of Aristotle, Carboni points out, often results from faulty translations of his works and from the incorrect interpretations of his commentators, since it is necessary to have a command of the Greek language so that his writings can be approached in the original text. He believed that it was necessary to compare the different Aristotelian *loci*, that is to interpret Aristotle with the help of Aristotle rather than his commentators: "Aristotle himself should explain his teaching, should establish his dogma, before this is done by Andronicus, Alexander, Porphyry, Averroës, or any other commentator, whether of greater antiquity or authority. It is easier to deduce from his own books than from as many of his commentators" (p. 387). According to these principles, preference should be given to Greek commentators, since they are closer to Aristotle's thought. From the medieval Latin commentators (Boethius, Albertus Magnus, Aegidius, Duns Scotus, Thomas), the greatest regard must be given to the *Doctor angelicus*, "the prince of all theologians" (p. 390). Arab writers are undoubtedly inferior to Greek and Latin commentators, since they used corrupted manuscripts and "because all of them were infected (*infecti*) by Islam, or by another false religion" (p. 389). For religious reasons Avicenna should be preferred to Averroës, "because he alone among all the Arabs seems to have come very near the true beauty and glory of Christian philosophy" (p. 391).

After antiquity, according to Carboni, the history of Western philosophy continues only as the survival of the thought of one of the two schools, or one of the two philosophers. Thus begins the period of exegesis, of the commentators, interpreters, and translators of Plato's and above all Aristotle's works, numerous not only during the Latin and Arab Middle Ages, but also in modern times (Ficino, Giovanni Pico, Patrizi, Steuco).

Carboni's philological and didactic concerns and ever-present religious aims serve to reveal the educational nature of his introduction to philosophy,

which contains one of the most significant histories of philosophy written before the end of the sixteenth century.

On the life and works:

L. Jacobilli, *Bibliotheca Umbriae, sive De scriptoribus provinciae Umbriae alphabetico ordine digesta. Una cum discursu praefatae provinciae*. . . (Foligno, 1658), pp. 182–3; Jöcher, Vol. 1, col. 1665; F. Vecchietti, *Biblioteca picena o sia notizie istoriche delle opere e degli scrittori piceni* (Osimo, 1793), Vol. III, pp. 144–7; G. B. Vermiglioli, *Biografia degli scrittori perugini e notizie delle opere loro* (Perugia, 1828), Vol. 1, p. 222; Hurter, Vol. III, coll. 156–7; DThC, Vol. 11, col. , 1712. A census of Aristotelian commentaries composed by Carboni was made by C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), p. 77.

On his teaching at the University of Perugia:

V. Bini, 'Storia della Università di Perugia', *Biblioteca Universitaria di Perugia*, MS, pt. III, fol. 30^v; G. Ermini, *Storia della Università di Perugia* (Florence, 1971), Vol. 1, p. 621.

On the circulation of Carboni's writings and opinions of his character as a scholar:

Morhof, *Polybistor practicus*, Bk. vi. section x, § 1, p. 597 (mentions the *De bello legali inter legem et consuetudines*); *Polybistor literarius*, Bk. vi. ch. 4, § 7, p. 988 (mentions the *Bonus orator*; affirms that such a work "shows the author to be erudite"); Bayle, Vol. II, p. 51; Ch. Wolff, *Monitum ad Commentationem luculentam de differentia nexus rerum sapientis et fatalis necessitatis, quo nonnulla sublimia metaphysicae ac theologiae naturalis capita illustrantur* (Halle, 1724), § 5, p. 9 (mentions the *Compendium absolutissimum totius Summae Theologiae S. Thomae Aquinatis*; but, on the subject of Carboni's influence on Wolff's thought about St Thomas, see the recent article by M. Casula, 'Die Beziehungen Wolff-Thomas-Carbo in der Metaphysica latina: Zur Quellengeschichte der Thomas-Rezeption bei Christian Wolff', *Studia leibnitiana*, XI (1979), pp. 98–123; Tennemann, Vol. VIII/2, p. 991 (the above-mentioned *Compendium* is mentioned). Historians and bibliographers have often confused this author with the homonymous fifteenth-century poet and man of letters from Ferrara. See, for example, Jacobilli, p. 183; Lohr, p. 77. Amongst others who do not confuse them is G. Barotti, *Memorie istoriche di letterati ferraresi* (Ferrara, 1757), Vol. 1, p. 35, who mentions him specially in order to distinguish him from his fifteenth-century namesake, and the *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books* (London, 1975), Vol. LII, p. 383 (there is however a confusion in the 1941 edn, Vol. XXXII, coll. 293–4).

For references to the name of the theologian and philosopher Ludovico Carboni of Costacciaro, see:

L. Ferrari, *Onomasticon: Repertorio biobibliografico degli scrittori italiani dal 1501 al 1850* (Milan, 1947), p. 180; W. Risse, *Die Logik der Neuzeit*, Vol. 1: 1500–1640 (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, 1964), p. 58; W. Risse, *Bibliographia logica: Verzeichnis der Druckschriften zur Logik mit Angabe ihrer Fundorte*, Vol. 1: 1472–1800 (Hildesheim, 1965), p. 93 (limited to his works on logic).

His importance today has been emphasized chiefly by scholars of the history of logic:

E. J. Ashworth, 'The Doctrine of Supposition in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, LI (1969), pp. 260–85; id., *Language and Logic in the Post-medieval Period* (Dordrecht and Boston, 1974), pp. 5, 283 (mentions the work

Introductio in logicam (Venice, 1597)). Cf. also W. A. Wallace, *Galileo and his Sources: The Heritage of the Collegio Romano in Galileo's Science* (Princeton, 1984), passim.; id., *Galileo's Logic of Discovery and Proof: The Background, Content and Use of His Appropriated Treatises on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* (Dordrecht and Boston, 1992), pp. 81 and passim.; J. D. Moss, 'Ludovico Carbone's Commentary on Aristotle's *De caelo*', in *Nature and Scientific Method: Essays in Honor of William A Wallace*, ed. D. O. Dahlstrom (Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy, 20; Washington, D.C., 1990).

3. RELIGIOUS PRESSURES

3.1. Johann Grün

Johann Grün (Gruen, Gruene, Grunius), Professor of Logic and Ethics at the University of Wittenberg, like many other Protestant theologians of the second half of the sixteenth century, upheld the theory of the divine origins of wisdom.

For Grün, as for many others, philosophy began with the creation of the world and continued to spread without interruption throughout the centuries. This is the fundamental notion underlying Grün's *Oratio de philosophiae dignitate et utilitate*, or, according to the complete title given on the title page, *Philosophiae origo, progressus, definitio, divisio, dignitas, utilitates, quas vitae humanae et Ecclesiae confert, et caetera prolegomena pleraque de Philosophia generalia, quae librorum philosophicorum explicationi praemitti solent, Praefationis loco recitata, cum Logicen denuo incoaret, et nunc in gratiam studiosorum, qui synopsis corporis Philosophiae expetunt, edita a M. Iohanne Grunio Noribergense, Logices et Ethices in Academia Witebergensi professore*, 143 pp. (Wittenburg, 1587).

In the first part of his book devoted to the "dignity of philosophy", Grün presents a synchronic image of the cultural and civil history of all the world's people divided into three ages, which are then subdivided into periods of three centuries: from the Creation until Abraham, from Abraham until the birth of Christ, and from Christ until the end of the world. The history of humankind is the history of two opposite groups (*coetus*): "One belonged to the Lord, and we call it the Church, and the other is made up of the other part of human beings outside the Church" (p. 16). Thus in Grün's work there is a stringent adoption of St Augustine's scheme of the two cities, and he understands and interprets the whole of history, both before and after the birth of Christ, in the light of this scheme.

The events of the first age (from the Creation to Abraham) are obviously based on the Bible. Adam is the "first theologian and philosopher", Abel the second. Cain, on the other hand, is only a philosopher and not a theologian. He forgot the Lord and promise of future redemption, and "pursued only such arts which serve this present life" (p. 20). All of Cain's descendants (Cainites) were philosophers and not theologians, inventors of arts "which

served power and pleasure" (p. 22): Tubal-cain was the discoverer of metals, Jubal the inventor of musical instruments, and Naamah the first to wear feminine garments instead of animal skins. But philosophy was not the domain of the Cainites alone. It was also cultivated by Adam and the good forefathers, who studied not only religion — God, the Creation, the Fall, and the promise of salvation — but also nature, celestial movements, the stars, the arts, and human behaviour (ethics).

The second age of the world (Abraham to Christ) is also subdivided into a history of the good — that is, the history of the Church (*Ecclesia*), which combined the study of philosophy and theology — and of the bad, who "continued the wicked study (*impia studia*) of philosophy" (p. 27). Among the former were Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samson, the prophets of the Old Testament, the Judaic sects, and Jesus Christ; among the latter Cadmus, "who excelled in the study of philosophy in Phoenicia" (p. 29), the mythical Amphion, the poets Linus, Orpheus, and Musaeus; also Homer, Aesop the writer of fables, the Greek writers of tragicomedy Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and the poet Hesiod. It was at this moment that Greek philosophy and its historical development began (particularly as interpreted by Diogenes Laertius), with the Seven Wise Men, Thales and the Ionian school, Pythagoras and the Italian school, Xenophanes and the Eleatic school. During this second period, philosophy spread from Asia and Africa to Europe and Asia Minor. At the same time, the study of physics, mathematics, and arithmetic gained a new impetus, and the arts and the study of ethics developed further. By the end of the second and beginning of the third century of this period, during the time of Socrates, the "father of philosophy and inventor of ethics (*pater Philosophiae et inventor Ethices*)" (p. 39), the age of *prisca theologia* and *prisca philosophia* came to an end. Classical philosophy began with the beginning of the history of the sects (Peripatetics, Academicians, Stoics, Epicureans, and Cynics) which developed in Greece and then spread throughout the Roman Empire.

The third age of the world (from Christ to the end of time) was characterized by the Redemption of the world brought by the Messiah, the coming of the Antichrist, and the mysterious expectation of eschatological realities. It was, above all, the period of the true Church, the Church of Christ, the preserver of true theology and true philosophy. The principal exponents, who not only preserved the integrity of religion, but also cultivated philosophy, languages, and the arts, included the Apostle Paul, "the exceptional theologian and philosopher (*theologus et philosophus eximius*)" (p. 52), Justin, Lactantius, the Emperor Constantine, the martyrs, and the Church Fathers, who had not safeguarded the integrity of religion, but who had cultivated philosophy, language, and art. It was during this third period that the age of the Antichrist began, in the West with Pope Gregory the Great and in the East with the prophet Mohammed. Using fierce invective in a pamphlet

written in a style characteristic of the Reformation, Grün presented theology, philosophy, and civic affairs in the Middle Ages as obscured by the darkness of ignorance and superstition, because the Pope united spiritual and temporal power in his hands and “destroyed both the true light of the Divine word and the study of a purer philosophy (*una cum vera Verbi divini luce studia purioris etiam Philosophiae concidere*)” (p. 59). True philosophers were very scarce during this long period although philosophical writings were not lacking but they were in Grün’s judgement full of error and superstitious belief. The age of the Antichrist began its decline with the coronation of the Emperor Louis of Bavaria (1314) who was the first to deprive the Pope of the sword of temporal power. The spiritual hegemony of the Roman Pontiff was broken by John Hus, and later by the reformers. Thus, said Grün, “the light of the Divine word . . . shone forth from the popish darkness” (p. 63). With the reawakening of religion came the rebirth of philosophy. At the time of Louis the Bavarian, men “excellent in all kinds of learning (*in omni doctrinae genere praestantes*)” (p. 61) — Marsilius of Padua, Dante Alighieri and William of Ockham — fought against papal tyranny in their writings, unafraid of the excommunication imposed on them by the Pope. Scholars of this period, Nicholas of Lyra, Petrarch, Emanuel Chrysoloras, Theodore Gaza, George Trebizond, Conrad Celtis (the German poet and humanist), Johann Reuchlin, Thomas Linacre, and Erasmus of Rotterdam, marked the downfall of the Antichrist. Luther and Melanchthon were seen principally as promoters of the Reformation, even though they also dedicated themselves to the arts and sciences. Indeed, Melanchthon wrote a compendium of Peripatetic philosophy. Both, Grün asserts, “in their writings and speech, brought back to light the knowledge, received through Divine revelation and philosophy which had been purged of scholastic filth (*a sordibus Scholasticis*) and freed from the land of eternal darkness (p. 64)”.

For brief bibliographical notes:

Jöcher, II, col. 1211.

On the reception:

Heumann, II, p. 160.

On the significance of Grün’s work:

Malusa, ‘Origini’, p. 14 n. 19.

3.2. Otto Heurnius (1577-1652)

Among the historians of “barbarian philosophy”, Giovanni Battista Vico in his *Principii di scienza nuova* (§§ 44, 93, 100, 1247, 1415) mentioned frequently the Dutchman ‘Ottone Ornio’, or Otto van Heurne (Heurnius).

Otto Heurnius, professor of theology, philosopher, and physician, was overshadowed by the fame of his father, Jan, whom he succeeded in 1601 as Professor of Medicine at the University of Leiden. Heurnius' name is more closely linked with the history of philosophy, however, than with the history of medicine. He is the author of one of the first histories of barbarian philosophy: *Barbaricae philosophiae antiquitatum libri duo: I Chaldaicus, II Indicus. Opus historicum et philosophicum*, 314 pp. (with indices and prefaces) (Leiden, 1600).⁸

In the 'Praeloquium' to his book, after stressing his passion for the study of history and philosophy, Heurnius says ("Nothing pleases me as much as the study of the two subjects history and philosophy", fol. [4]r). He introduced his history of barbarian philosophy as follows:

We gave this work the general title *Barbaricae philosophiae antiquitatum*, because it hardly touches upon Greek or Latin philosophy. The title of the first book, 'Chaldaicus', was chosen because it shows that the starting point of philosophy was in Chaldea; the second received its title 'Indicus' because it began with the Indian philosophers. The work is arranged as follows. The first book briefly describes the propagation of philosophy from the beginning of the world up to the onset of Greek philosophy . . . The second book explains at great length what is highly compressed in the first book. What is only hinted at in the first book is explained in the second in an extended text and is illustrated with information from the remotest recesses of history. This entire work comes to an end at a point with the beginnings of the subject matter treated by Diogenes Laertius. Anyone wishing to know the history of philosophy from the beginning of the world throughout all the ages, should first read this present work, and then turn to Diogenes Laertius . . . (fol. [5]r-v).

Thus the author wished to write about that part of the history of most ancient philosophical wisdom which Diogenes Laertius had not treated: that is, from the creation of the world up to the emergence of philosophy among the Greeks.

The 'Liber primus qui et Chaldaicus inscribitur' begins with some reflections about philosophy, conceived, following ancient writers, as "the ascent of the soul from the low to the high (*sublimia*), from darkness to light" (p. 5). The author goes on to discuss Adam's wisdom in a state of natural grace: with the Fall, the primogenitor fell "into the shadowy workhouse of oblivion (*in tenebrosus oblivionis ergastulum*)" (p. 7), but he still possessed a glimmer of divine wisdom, received directly from God, which he later took great care to transmit to his descendants, especially to Seth, the third-born, and to those who would later be called the Patriarchs of humanity: Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah, who "learned very many secrets (*arcana*) of divine and human wisdom from his conversations with the ancient Fathers" (p. 11).

After the Flood, the history of wisdom took a difference way because it

⁸ The second edition of this work appeared with a different title: *Babylonica, indica, aegyptia etc., philosophiae primordia, auctore Otthone Heurnio*. . . (Leiden, 1619). The first and second edition are both prefaced by a text in verse: Christiaan Bruning, *Breviarium Barbaricae Philosophiae Antiquitatum Otthonis Heurni Ioannis Fili*, 5 unnumbered fols. On pp. 112-19 the author himself, "because of the similarity of the argument" ('Praeloquium', fol. [5]r), inserted the short text in verse by Marco Antonio Sabellico, *De rerum et artium inventoribus poema: ad M. D. Hieronymum Bassum, Foro-Julienensis provinciae quaestorem*.

was narrated partly in the books of the Old Testament and partly in Oriental Hermetic texts, or by Greek and Roman authors that Heurnius drew together in an unusual combination of sources on revelation, history, literature, and mythology. Among the impious and the insolent of this “interminable antiquity” (whose principal representatives were Ham and Nimrod, the “bitter subduer”, p. 15) there also existed wise men. In the Chaldean city of Ur, for example, there flourished “fellowships (*collegia*) of philosophers adhering to piety” (p. 20). The “knowledge (*cognitio*) of God” in particular was prominent in Chaldea, where, apart from theology, sciences and disciplines such as astronomy, astrology, and the art of divination, philosophy too made great progress (“among the Chaldeans once flourished a no less perfect philosophy than shone among the Greeks during Aristotle’s lifetime”, p. 26). It should be noted that Aristotle, for Heurnius, is the only “eagle of wisdom (*aquila sapientiae*)” in history: see p. 83). From this cradle of ancient wisdom emerged “three fathers, propagators of divine and human wisdom: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (p. 27). Their history is identified with the journey and progress of wisdom among mankind. Following divine orders, Abraham travelled from Ur to the land of Canaan, “where he taught many things to the Phoenicians who ruled far and wide in it” (p. 28). Among other things, the Hebrews taught the Phoenicians the use of writing, whose very beginnings lay in the tablets of revelation to Moses. Cadmus, the son of the Phoenician king Agenor, transported this invention to Greece, together with other arts and disciplines cultivated by his countrymen. During their extended sea voyages the Phoenicians “transferred philosophy to other regions” (p. 33): outstanding among these were Greece, Carthage (where “schools of the liberal arts, philosophers’ workshops, and *gymnasias* of morals” flourished, p. 34), Magna Graecia, Italy, and the land of the Vituli.

A new chapter in the history of wisdom began when Abraham was forced to leave Phoenicia, which had been struck by a terrible famine. “Having heard that Egypt abounded in food, he travelled to that country with all his family. For he had learnt that philosophy was splendidly cultivated in Egypt” (p. 38). The long contact Abraham had with the wise priests of that country led to a mutual exchange of treasures of wisdom, which were preserved from generation to generation. According to Heurnius, Abraham even adopted the role of teacher to the Egyptian priests: “He daily discussed with the priests . . . the knowledge (*cognitio*) of nature and of the stars, and taught them very much. He also gave them the knowledge of arithmetic, which they had been inexperienced in before, and spread many treasures of divine wisdom (*multique divinae sapientiae thesauri*) before them” (p. 38). Immediately afterwards he repeats: “This learning, both sacred and profane, given to the Egyptians by Abraham, was doubtless afterwards acquired with interest (*incrementum*) by Joseph and Jacob” (p. 39). Thus, the meeting between Abraham and the Egyptian priests marks the golden age of the most ancient

philosophical wisdom, which during this time was articulated into various well-defined disciplines: theology, astronomy, magic, astrology, geometry, geography, medicine, literature, history, ethics, and politics. Therefore, according to Heurnius, Egypt must be regarded as the second cradle of barbarian wisdom after Chaldea. From Egypt, wisdom spread to Greece, the Orient, and the most remote parts of Europe; this happened particularly during the legendary wars of expansion led by the great Pharaoh Sesostris (see pp. 40 ff.). This high period of wisdom in Egypt lasted until the time of Alexander the Great: "Egyptian learning endured and remained unchanged until the fate of Alexander the Great. After his death, his successors divided the kingdom among themselves, and by chance Ptolemy gained possession of Egypt; he was followed by his son Philadelphus. At that time philosophy lost its ancient place" (pp. 57-8). From this point onwards wisdom underwent new developments; the most significant were the great cultural centre of Alexandria in Egypt, the advent of Christ and the proclamation of his gospel, and what Heurnius calls the "Mohammedan fury (*Mohameticus furor*)" (p. 58) with the ensuing Islamic occupation of a large part of the Eastern world.

It is clear, therefore, that a new dispersal of barbarian wisdom went forth from Egypt:

For when Moses forced his way out of here, it slipped away into its native land of Canaan, from whence under Plato's leadership it entered Greece. Thence, after many people had paved the path with (so to speak) a finer gravel (*sabulo* not *fabulo*) of wisdom, it set forth for the islands and Asia. Danaus and Aesculapius opening up the paths to Greece, it passed beyond the bounds of its homeland; next, enticed by Orpheus and others of their own accord, it advanced with greater confidence; finally, with all obstacles removed, and a royal road built, under the leadership of Pythagoras, Plato, and others it introduced itself to Greece. From there it made its way to Italy, whence flowing gradually forwards it watered the whole world with abundant fountains of wisdom (p. 60).

The return of the Hebrews, guided by Moses, to Palestine, the land promised by God to their fathers, also contributed to the spreading of Egyptian wisdom. However, from this time Jewish history developed for the most part independently; it had fame and notoriety particularly with Solomon, whom even the Queen of Sheba visited for his wisdom. Imitating the Egyptians' *collegia sapientum*, the Jews instituted their own sects (Essenes, Sadducees, Pharisees), whose chief occupation was to promote the study of a particularly refined exegesis of the Mosaic law. At this point in the history of wisdom, the importance of the Jews was attested by Numenius the Pythagorean, who said "The sciences came to Greece from Judea" (p. 62) and "Plato is nothing but Moses speaking in the Attic language (*nihil aliud . . . quam Mosem Attica*

lingua loquentem)” (p. 62). There is also the testimony of Clearchus, who “writes in the first book on sleep that he saw a Judean from whom Aristotle had learnt a great deal” (p. 63).

The last part of Heurnius’ ‘*Liber Chaldaicus*’ is almost entirely devoted to evidence that Greek philosophical wisdom was derived from Egypt:

Philosophy travelled from Egypt to Greece (p. 64).

For Cecrops [the divinity worshipped at the Acropolis in Athens] had come from Egypt; he instituted a government in the form of a kingdom in Attica and with the help of Egyptian laws forced this barbarian people, unacquainted with laws and governing, into virtuous and honest behaviour. He taught them to abhor marriages between relatives and the promiscuous use of women (p. 64).

Orpheus, the disciple of Linus and a friend of Hercules, brought theology and philosophy from Egypt to Greece. He travelled to Egypt to seek knowledge and learnt many precepts of wisdom there, and returning to Greece he turned everything into fables to evoke greater wonder, and invented many things astonishing and terrifying to believe (pp. 68–9).

Solon and Lycurgus were the first to bring laws from Egypt to Greece (p. 69).

To these importers and transmitters of Egyptian wisdom, he added the mythical Danaus and the Danaïds (see p. 65), Aesculapius, who was the first to bring medicine from Egypt to Greece, the seven sages, Pythagoras, Porphyry, Plato, and his successor Aristotle, “who assembled all the findings of Indian, Babylonian, Egyptian, Hebrew, and Persian philosophers, which shed light on human philosophy” (p. 80). He urged the Greeks to acknowledge humbly the true roots of their philosophy:

Come now, you Greeks, and praise the unspeakable age of your wisdom. Go, discard your pride, and make yourselves aware that when your philosophy could hardly stutter (*vix balbutientem*), it received nourishment from the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Indians, and avidly consumed this food which had been chewed for so many centuries, and transformed it into its own blood and juice; thus gaining finally utter strength (pp. 78–9).

He thought that wisdom spread not only from Egypt to Greece, but also to Babylon and Persia, where there was a particular development of magic, which later had such a diffusion not only in the East but also in Western countries such as Gaul, Britain, Italy and Greece (see pp. 92–3).

The final stage of philosophy’s development took place in Greece. (It should be noted that Heurnius hardly distinguishes between ‘wisdom’ and ‘philosophy’; at the end of his history he states simply that “We have now set forth the origin and propagation of philosophy”, p. 93.) After it had spread

through Asia where it suffered changing fortunes ("The light of philosophy was often obscured by various vicissitudes and frequently almost extinguished by barbarian darkness", p. 97), philosophy finally arrived in Greece, which was more hospitable to it than any other country had been. Here it experienced a new rebirth, as Diogenes Laertius recounted in his *De vitis philosophorum*.

The 'Liber secundus qui et Indicus inscribitur' is made up of four treatises: (1) 'De Indorum philosophis' (pp. 120-48); (2) 'De Babyloniorum et Phoenicum philosophis' (pp. 148-96); (3) 'De Aegyptiorum, Iudaeorumque philosophis' (pp. 196-252); (4) 'De impura magia Asiatica, Africana et Europaea' (pp. 252-314).

As the author states in the 'Praeloquium' to his work, the title 'Indicus' given to this second book reflects the fact that "it starts with the philosophers of the Indians" (fol. [5]r), and in particular with Zoroaster, "King of the Bactrians, and prince of Magi". Heurnius is aware of the existence of another Magus by the name of Zoroaster, who came from Persia and was mentioned by Diogenes Laertius in the proem of his *Lives of the Philosophers*. Zoroaster, King of the Bactrians, was, instead, the first founder of a "pure magic . . . that is, the veneration of God the Most High and knowledge (*cognitio*) of the powers of the stars and nature" (p. 122), and he "greatly advanced divine and human philosophy" (p. 122). Later, however, "he hurled himself from the high peak of the purest knowledge into the abyss of filthy magic (*in barathrum inquinatae magiae*)" (p. 122). Heurnius quoted from texts of this Zoroaster's oracles (pp. 124-40) which had already been collected by Francesco Patrizi ("who is, I aver, easily the most eminent philosopher of our age", p. 124) and which Heurnius simplifies and translates into Latin. Other very ancient Indian philosophers who lived after Zoroaster were the wise Brahmins (*Brachmanni*), who originated from "those illegitimate sons of Abraham whom the Patriarch had sent away to the East" (p. 140). More recently there were the wise men known as Banians (*Baneanes*) and Brahmins (*Bracmanes*), to whom Heurnius devotes little space in his history.

The second treatise of the 'Liber Indicus' discusses Babylonian and Phoenician philosophers. It starts with a chapter on the mythical Bel (Baal), father of Semiramis, in whose honour his daughter built a magnificent temple in Babylon. Bel also held an important place in the history of pre-Greek wisdom. According to the testimony of the elder Pliny's *Historia naturalis* (vi. 26 [30]) "this Bel was the first inventor among the Babylonians of the science of the stars" (p. 154). But concerning this Bel, who became the greatest of the Babylonian gods, Heurnius also quoted the celebrated passage of the Bible (Dan. 14: 2-22) in which were uncovered the Babylonian priests' fraud and the falseness of this god "created by the hands of man", to quote

the Psalmist. At this point Heurnius' history of barbarian philosophy concentrates on Chaldean wisdom and in particular the cults of the sun and fire gods, predictions, and the wise sayings of the Chaldeans. One of the great sages of barbarian antiquity was a Chaldee: Job, the well-known biblical patriarch, an eminent cultivator of divine and human philosophy (see pp. 165-6). The last part of the second treatise is devoted to the Phoenicians' *fabulosa theologia* (ch. 11) and in particular to Cadmus, son of King Agenor, who "first introduced the mysteries and the solemn cult of the gods, the consecration of images, and hymns from Phoenicia to Greece" (p. 193).

The third treatise is devoted to Egyptian and Hebrew philosophers and wise men, whose histories were always closely connected. Heurnius discusses the Egyptians' *fabulosa theologia* (ch. 14), *mystica philosophia* (ch. 15), their sayings (*placita*) about wisdom (ch. 16), hieroglyphics (ch. 17), the twelve recognized signs of the zodiac (ch. 18), ancient disputes on doctrine (ch. 19), and, finally, legislation (ch. 20). Referring to the first book of Kings in the Bible, he then discusses the Hebrews "Schelomo" or Solomon (ch. 21) and also writes about Shammai and Hillel (the former the founder of the Scribes, the latter of the Pharisees), the sect of Recabites (who would later be called Essenes, or 'saints', for their austere lifestyle), the Sadducees, Samaritans, Hemerobaptists, and Nazirites. The Thracian Orpheus, Hermes Trismegistus, Aglaophemus, and Pythagoras also play a part in the history of Hebrew wisdom because of the various contacts they had had with the chosen people. After Hermes Trismegistus, whom Heurnius describes as a "supreme philosopher (*summus philosophus*)", priest, and prophet because Hermes foresaw the downfall of false religion and the advent of Christ, the author summarizes the development of ancient wisdom: "In a later age his theology [Hermes'] was taken up by Orpheus, and Orpheus introduced Aglaophemus to his sacred mysteries. Aglaophemus was in turn followed by Pythagoras, and he by Philolaus, the teacher of the divine Plato. Thus there was an ancient theological sect consisting of six theologians in succession, starting with Hermes, and finishing with the divine Plato" (p. 249).

The fourth and last treatise is entirely dedicated to *impura magia* in Asia (ch. 28), founded by the Persian Zoroaster, Africa (ch. 29), and Europe (chs. 30-33). He subdivided Europe into Etruscan, Roman, Gallic (the latter practised by the Druids), and Germanic regions. In this last section of his book Heurnius draws more frequently on literary sources than on historical ones, quoting at length from the works of Cicero, Lucretius, Diodorus Siculus, Martial, Ovid (above all), and Virgil.

On the life and works:

Freher, Vol. II, pp. 1341-2; C. Burman, *Trajectum eruditum, virorum doctrina inlustrum, qui in urbe Trajecto, et regione Trajectensi nati sunt, sive ibi habitaverunt, vitas, fata et scripta*

exhibens (Utrecht, 1738), pp. 141-4; Jöcher, Vol. II, col. 1580; BUAM, Vol. XIX, p. 393; Van Der Aa, Vol. III, p. 228; Hirsch, Vol. III, pp. 205-6; DSB, Vol. VI, p. 360.

In general the figure of this author is joined to that of his father Jan (1543-1601), a doctor, whose reception and fame were far greater than that enjoyed by his son: cf. Adam, [III], pp. 164-8; Freher, Vol. II, pp. 1307-10; Nicéron, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 36-45; Burman, *Traiectum eruditum*, pp. 134-41; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 1578-80; BUAM, Vol. XIX, p. 393; Van Der Aa, Vol. III, pp. 226-8; ADB, Vol. XII, pp. 333-4; Hirsch, Vol. III, p. 205; DSB, Vol. VI, pp. 359-60.

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. I, ch. I, § 9, pp. 5-6; *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. I, ch. 13, § 33, p. 129; Struve, Vol. I, chap. 3, § 2, pp. 164-5; Fabricius, Vol. I, Bk. I, ch. 36, § 8, pp. 311-12; Heumann, Vol. II, p. 174; Johann Heinrich Böckler, *Bibliografia critica scriptores omnium artium atque scientiarum ordine percensens nunc demum integra et emendatius edita accessionibusque ex reliquis scriptis boeclerianis aucta, recensuit Io. Gottlieb Krause qui etiam praefationem animadversiones et indices adiecit* (Leipzig, 1715), ch. 40: 'De scriptoribus philosophicis', § 8, p. 609; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 26, § 2, p. 144; Stolle, p. 435; Brucker, Vol. I, p. 6 and p. 104; G. B. Vico, *La scienza nuova*, ed. F. Nicolini (Bari, 1953), Vol. I, § 44, p. 38; § 93, p. 59; § 100, p. 64; Vol. II, § 1247, p. 208; § 1415, p. 284; unabridged Eng. trans. of 3rd edn, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico / Principi di una scienza nuova*, ed. T. A. Bergin and Max H. Fisch (Ithaca, NY, 1984).

A few notes on the significance of his work:

Braun, p. 369; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 31 n. 66.

3.3. Caspar Bucher

Caspar Bucher (Bucherus), professor of eloquence at the University of Tübingen at the beginning of the seventeenth century, also defended the theory of the barbarian origin of wisdom.

We have a dissertation that he presented to the philosophy and arts students at the University of Tübingen: *Oratio de philosophiae antiquitate, praestantia, atque utilitate, in vigiliis Catharinae habita a M. Casparo Buechero, linguarum professore. Eccles. cap. I "Omnis sapientia a Domino Deo est, et cum illo fuit semper, et est ante aevum" Anno salutis 1602, 16 fols.* (Tübingen, 1603). Like Schröter, Bucher argues forcefully that barbarian wisdom — Hebrew, Egyptian, and Chaldean — is more ancient than the Greek. Pythagoras and Thales were not the inventors of wisdom (which rather fell from the sky, according to the famous passage by Plato that Bucher himself liked to recall), they merely introduced it to the Western world. This is the principal theme of the oration. Other concepts, such as the period when the terms wisdom and philosophy were invented, the beauty and usefulness of philosophical study, and every man's need of philosophical wisdom, are of secondary importance from the historiographical point of view.

According to Bucher the origins of wisdom should be initially sought "from the sacred books of the Hebrews", "of whom the *sophoi* or *sapientes* are Moses, Joseph, Isaac's son Jacob, Abraham, and others, and the first men of

all, Noah, Enoch, Seth, and Adam the first-created, who are far more ancient than even the most ancient philosophers" (fol. 7^r). Here the author repeats several of the topics common to anticlassical historiography of the age of religious inspiration. His whole thesis is, in fact, sustained by the conviction of the superiority of the sacred Scriptures to profane letters. Adam possessed great wisdom because he named everything; Noah and Abraham because they studied the movements of the stars; Abraham and Moses because "they were the first teachers (*professores*) of grammar" (fol. 7^v); while Trismegistus learnt his wisdom at Moses' school; Pythagoras and Thales lived during the Jews' captivity in Babylon; Socrates was a contemporary of Ezra, author of the last book of the biblical Canon. Furthermore, nearly all the most famous ancient Greek sages, Plato, Eudoxus, Solon, Pythagoras, Orpheus, Musaeus, Melampus, Daedalus, Homer, and Lycurgus "in the early days (*prisci tempores*) crossed over to the Egyptians" (fol. 7^r) and "indeed some of them also attended the Persian Magi (among whom the prophet Daniel flourished under Darius the Mede)" (fol. 7^v).

This was confirmed by the testimony not only of the Greeks Porphyry, Clearchus, Iamblichus, Isocrates, and Thales and of the Jewish Flavius Josephus (who followed Berossus, the most ancient Babylonian historian, Hermippus of Smyrna, Theophrastus, and Herodotus of Halicarnassus), but also of the Fathers and Christian writers: Eusebius above all, Nicephorus, Augustine, and finally Luther 'the brightest (*lucidissimus*) and most illustrious (*splendidissimus*) star of his country' (fol. 5^v).

After this *excursus* on the barbarian origins of wisdom, Bucher went on in his oration to discuss the beauty and usefulness of wisdom and philosophy, the former for studying divine things and the latter for studying human ones. The orator's enthusiastic defense of philosophy and heated exhortations to the young to enjoy studying it make this *oratio* an inspiration to philosophy which is not unworthy of being included in this ancient literary genre.

There are a few biographical references in Jöcher, Vol. 1, col. 1449.

3.4. *Martinus Erii Gestrinius* *Ericus Gislonis Spinerus Smolandus*

In the decades preceding the advent of the 'history of philosophy', discussion on the divine origins of philosophy can also be found in graduate dissertations.

Of interest is a *Disputatio de philosophiae origine, natura, et sobrio in SS. Theologia usu. De consensu amplissimae Facultatis Philosophicae in Regia Upsaliensium Academia, liberalis exercitii ergo, prosummo in Philosophia gradu consequendo, dirigente viro clarissimo et doctis-*

simo, M. Martino Eri Gestrinio, meth. inf. profess. publ. et Facultatis Philos. p. t. Decano spectabili, quam ventilandam proponit Ericus Gislonis Spinerus Smolandus. In auditorio Maiori ad diem . . . Maij. Horis a 6 matut., 12 unnumbered fols. (Uppsala, 1625). This work, in spite of its brevity and the fact that it follows the requirements of the genre, is significant because it demonstrates that the theory of the non-Greek origins of philosophy had spread even to university circles.

After an introductory statement on the grandeur and dignity of man, defined biblically as "the plain print of God's image (*perspicuum imaginis Dei vestigium*)", the disputant Ericus Spinerus puts forward the theory of the divine origins of philosophical wisdom, an idea typical of Jewish and Christian apologists and particularly dear to Renaissance Platonists. He states that philosophy was not invented by man, still less inspired by the devil — as certain Protestants such as Grün, who still held to ancient Patristic trends, liked to insinuate — but is "the perfect gift of God, giver of all good" (n. 11). It was born with the creation of the first man, to whom was given the possibility of knowing both human affairs (philosophy) and divine affairs (theology). Evidence of Adam's endowment with philosophical wisdom can be deduced from the fact that he gave names to everything that had been created "according to their species and genera (*secundum speciem et genus suum*)". To repeat a platitude from the philosophical historiography of the time, Adam was the "first master and teacher of philosophy (*primus philosophiae magister et doctor*)" (n. 14).

Spinerus then maintained that philosophy was not born among the Romans, nor among the Greeks, whose history is less ancient than the Jews'. He held that it was the age of a people that decided the true origins of philosophy, not just the literary production transmitted to posterity. As a result, although Moses had been the most ancient philosopher to leave us any writings, we should not believe on that account that he was humanity's first philosopher. Before him, in fact, "from the first Creation and beginning of the world, there were very many men who excelled in both divine and human wisdom" (n. 21), not to mention Adam himself, who had received his knowledge directly from God.

Spinerus schematically traced the route taken first by wisdom and then by philosophy through the centuries: Adam received wisdom from God and transmitted it to his descendants; the Holy Fathers, exiled in Egypt, taught it to the Armenians and Egyptians, and numerous Greeks poured in among them, attracted by the desire for knowledge; finally it came "through all parts of the earth and corners of the world and places dispersed far and wide . . . till at last it came to us who dwell under this northern pole, not without an especial and gracious visitation of God" (n. 24).

There are a few bibliographical references about Martinus Eri Gestrinius in Jöcher, Vol. 11, col. 973. It has not been possible, however, to identify the disputant of this dissertation, Ericus Gislonis Spinerus Smolandus.

4. ANTI-ARISTOTELIANISM AND THE RECOVERY OF OTHER PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITIONS

4.1. Jean Riolan (1539–1605)

Two scholastic lectures delivered towards the middle of the sixteenth century by the doctor and philosopher Jean Riolan (Riolanus) from Amiens, have a certain importance for the historiographical theories expressed in them rather than for their development of an actual history of philosophy, which was reduced to a few schematic allusions, as we shall see.

The *Disputatio prima de origine philosophiae* (Paris, 1565; fols. 1–8) is a passionate defence of the theory of the divine origin of philosophy. Philosophy is the gift of God, not the invention of man and still less of demons. Only God is wise. This was asserted by the Indian Brahmins, the Persian Magi, the Egyptian priests, the Hebrew prophets, the Gallic Druids, the Orphic poets, the Pythagoreans and all the Platonic philosophers. The four most ancient philosophers — also known as mythographers because they concealed their knowledge in myths and fables — Orpheus, Musaeus, Melampus and “Trophraus” (i.e., Trophonius: “Trophraus flourished in Boeotia”, fol. 5^r) created a philosophy which consisted solely of hymns in praise of the gods. Plato asserted that the great Zoroaster’s magic “was nothing other than piety and divine worship (*cultus divinus*)”, (fol. 5^r). Porphyry referred to the interpreters of divine matters as “Magi”. Magic for Zamolxis was no more than medicine for the soul, “entirely taken up with the divine names” (fol. 5^v). Pythagoras attributed each scientific discovery to the gods and expressed his thanks by sacrificing a hundred oxen. No Greek or Latin poet failed to invoke divine aid before setting to work on a composition. Even the ancient lawmakers (Trismegistus, Zamolxis, Charondas, Lycurgus, Solon, Minos, Moses) dedicated the laws they promulgated to God. Riolan concluded: “Shall we petty men (*homunculi*) deny the invention of philosophy to God, and like the giants still fight the gods?” (fols. 5^v–6^r). Syllogistically with another argument he confirms his theory on the divine origin of philosophy: “Philosophy . . . is nothing other than the love of knowledge and truth. But love . . . is divine . . . Therefore philosophy is divine” (fol. 6^v). Thus the first man received his knowledge directly from God.

The second disputation, entitled *De incremento et decremento philosophiae* (ibid., fols. 9–13), is more directly concerned with the history of philosophy. It begins with a synthesis of man’s philosophizing, viewing it as principally the development and exaltation of Aristotle’s thought. The author begins with Pythagoras, the first philosopher in history. He did not write anything, and Riolan comments that we owe what we know of his life and teaching

to his disciples. The greatest *incrementum* of philosophy occurred with the Academy and the Lyceum, the first founded by Plato and the second by Aristotle. Between these two great masters from antiquity, there was a notable difference not only in the thought contained in their work, but also in the method with which their work was conducted. In some ways Plato still belonged to the *fabulosi*. He concealed his theology from the inexperienced; "he indulged in frequent allegories" (fol. 10^v). This method was criticized by his disciple Aristotle, who amongst other things undertook the study and investigation of natural phenomena. According to Riolan, Aristotle was the greatest philosopher in history. His annotators and his severest critics only succeeded in clarifying his thoughts and rendering them more explicit. This was the true significance of the exegetical work of Alexander of Aphrodisias, Eustrathius, Philoponus, Themistius, Simplicius, Ammonius, Olympiodorus, Porphyry and Iamblichus. Peripatetic doctrine had a new *incrementum* with the advent of the Christian religion and the establishment of new schools where, together with the new faith, young people were also taught a more truthful philosophy. Aristotle was read more than Plato in these schools. The translation of Aristotle's works into Arabic and the consequent corruption of his thought opened a new phase in the history of philosophy (which for Riolan is essentially the history of Aristotelianism). This is the age in which true philosophy underwent the greatest *decrementum*. Philosophers in the Scholastic age no longer called themselves followers of Aristotle, but Thomists or Scotists, realists or nominalists. Greek literature finally returned to Italy with Chrysoloras, and through the generosity of King Francis I, to France. Then people began once more to read Aristotle in the original and to understand his thought better.

The *De incremento et decremento philosophiae* closes with a return to the theme of the most ancient origins of philosophy, an argument already dealt with in the first of these lectures. But while the theory of a divine origin to philosophy, and in particular a biblical one, is put forward in the *De origine*, here Riolan offers a history of philosophy and its origins that is inspired by mythology. Mnemosyne, the daughter of Jupiter, had a son by her incestuous love affair with her father; the child was then given into the care of Trismegistus, Zoroaster, Zamolxis, Orpheus, Melampus, Trophonius, Aglaophemus, Hesiod, and Homer, who recognized him as the son of the king of the gods and sang his praises in their hymns and poems. The heavenly child was raised among the Magi and the Semnothei. Thales called him *sophia*, Pythagoras *philosophia*. From this moment philosophy developed further through the Academics, the Peripatetics, and the Stoics. As an adult he went to Rome, but was chased from the Imperial capital and ended up taking refuge in Gaul, where he could live in hiding. Today philosophy has reappeared among men in all his splendour, having been recognized as the wise guide of the people and the inspiration behind their civilization.

For bibliographical information :

BUAM, Vol. xxxviii, pp. 45-6.

For mention of Riolan :

Imperiali, p. 202 ; Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. I, ch. 12, § 1, p. 66 ; Bk. II, ch. 12, § 7, p. 223.

On the significance of his work :

Braun, p. 368 ; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 13 n. 19 ; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 118 n. 2.

4.2. Jean Cecile Frey (c.1580-1631)

The 'Philosophia Druidarum'⁹ is not without a certain interest for the history of the historiography of philosophy ; it is by the Parisian doctor and philosopher, Jean Cecile Frey (Frejus), who was born around 1580 at Keiserstuhl in the county of Baden and died in Paris in 1631. As well as an exposition of Druid thought, his work contains some general historiographical theories which serve to indicate the extent to which the debate on the origins of philosophy was alive during the first half of the seventeenth century.

According to Frey, there are three philosophical sects : the Italic, founded by Pythagoras ; the Greek, which was begun by the first wise men of Greece ; and finally, most ancient of all, the barbarian, which included the wise men of all other nations : "the barbarian sect is that outside Greece or Italy, and is the most ancient, originating from the first father" (p. 3). This sect traced its origins to the fathers of humanity, Adam and Seth. Seth, Adam's eldest son, passed his father's wisdom to his descendants and engraved "the precepts of philosophy (*inventa philosophiae*)" on two pillars — "one of brick and the other of stone", so that they could not be destroyed by fire or water.

This was the source of the wisdom of the Chaldeans, the Egyptians and the Gauls, one of humanity's most ancient races (*antiquissima gens* : "a very ancient" or "the most ancient people"), whose wisdom was much older than that of the Greeks. Clement of Alexandria, recalls Frey, claimed that the Greeks were chronologically the last to cultivate philosophy, and Augustine confirmed that the Gauls were students of philosophy prior to the Greeks. Towards the conclusion of his work Frey elaborates that the Gauls were familiar with Judaic doctrines and states that both Pythagoras, the founder

⁹ The work is found in Jean Cecile Frey, *Opuscula varia nusquam edita, Philosoph. Medic. et Curiosis omnibus utilis. quorum est series*. 1. *Philosophia Druidarum*. 2. *Cribrum Philosophorum*. 3. *Propositiones de Universo curiosiores*. 4. *Cosmographiae Selectiora*. 5. *Dialectica veterum, praeceptis ad expeditam rerum notitiam utilissimis instructa*. 6. *Compendium Medicinae. Quibus adiectibus est perutilis Titulorum et Capitum omnium Index* (Paris, 1646), pp. 1-28. The work 'Philosophia Druidarum' carries the explanation : 'Exscribebat 12 kal. quintil. an. 1625, in Colleg. Becod. Ioannes Gigot Donomarensis'.

of the Italian school of philosophy and king Numa Pompilius were followers of the Druids, the Gaulish priests. Pythagorean philosophy, therefore, can be traced back to the Druids.

Frey's historiographical theories are taken from Symphorien Champier and contrasted with those of Diogenes Laertius, who denied that the origins of Gallic philosophy were more ancient than those of Greek: "Diogenes Laertius denies that the philosophy of the Gauls was older than Greek philosophy. (1) The word *philosophia*, he says, shows that it had not been discovered by barbarians. (2) Because it speaks through riddles (*per aenigmata*). (3) Because the Greeks are the most ancient (*antiquissima*) race" (p. 4). But Laertius' affirmations are refuted by Frey:

To the first: every nation had their own words (*nomina*) for wise men (*sapientes*) . . . To the second: Pythagoras, the Egyptians, and the Jews philosophize in this way and yet are more ancient than the Greeks . . . To the third: how does he know the Greeks are more ancient than the Gauls? On the contrary, it is certain that Greece is subject to earthquakes and floods, as is proved by Deucalion's Flood and so many ruined cities; Gaul, which has never known tremors, lacks both (pp. 5-6).

Frey goes on to describe the thought and activities of the Druids, the priestly caste of the Gauls. Their philosophy was divided into three parts: first into poetics and oratory, second into natural philosophy, including "diviners of entrails, astrologers, and physicians" (p. 7), third into theology, law, and politics ("They were theologians, moralists, statesmen, expert in the laws and in charge of sacrifices to the gods. Therefore theology, law, and politics were the third part of philosophy", p. 7). Their teaching was verbal, not written, and their schools were dark caverns, subterranean passages, and lonely woods. They taught philosophy only to the sons of nobles and committed their knowledge to thousands of verses in order to facilitate the learning of it. They believed in the immortality of the soul, in metempsychosis and the resurrection of the body:

They teach, first, that souls are immortal . . . Secondly, they taught that our souls stayed in the underworld before they rose again, but it is not clear from the authorities whether they believed in resurrection in the same body, or as Julius Caesar reports by metempsychosis. But the two things must be linked, namely that souls are immortal and that they will rise again in either the same or another body (pp. 11-12).

They also believed in the existence of a God who had to be worshipped and placated with sacrificial victims: "They declared that God must be worshipped . . . They taught that God must be placated with a human victim, taken from either criminals or captured enemies; and since there was rarely a shortage of offenders or captives, they seldom sacrificed the innocent"

(p. 13). They cultivated the astrological and natural sciences, and held in great honour the virtues of justice, temperance, and modesty.

Bibliographical notes:

Niceron, Vol. xxxix, pp. 49–56; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 748–9; BUAM, Vol. xv, pp. 166–7. For the Latin commentaries on Aristotle compiled by Frey see C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), p. 154.

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. I, ch. 13, § 33, p. 129; Struve, Vol. I, cap. 3, § 7, p. 204; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 31, § 3, p. 176; Stolle, p. 434.

On the significance of his work:

C. Vasoli, *L'enciclopedia del Seicento* (Naples, 1978), p. 79 (deals only with the encyclopaedic work *Via ad divas scientias artesque*).

4.3. Paganino Gaudenzio (1595–1649)

Paganino Gaudenzio (Paganini Gaudenzi, Gaudentius), a contemporary of Galileo and a close friend of Claude Bérigard, was professor of eloquence at Pisa and a man of vast erudition. His work *De veterum Ecclesiae Patrum philosophicis pronuntiatis Liber*¹⁰ is not truly a history of patristic philosophy describing the wisdom of the Fathers in its historical development, but a work of a largely theoretical character, focusing mainly on the principal theological, psychological, and cosmological problems present in the works of the ancient Christian writers. Principal among these was Tertullian, whose statements are sometimes accepted and sometimes rejected, but are always critically and precisely investigated and continually compared not only with the theories of other ancient Christian thinkers but also with those of the Greek and Latin philosophers.

In spite of its largely theoretical character, this work is of interest to the history of the historiography of philosophy. The opening chapters contain the usual debate about when the birth of wisdom and philosophy took place. Wisdom is defined, in Tertullian's words, as the knowledge of the truth ("the knowledge of which [truth] Tertullian called wisdom", p. 141). Gaudenzio also concludes with Tertullian's words: "Philosophy seemed also to have drawn on Holy Scripture. It is credible that every searcher (*indagator*) after truth went to the Prophets themselves from restless curiosity (*ex negotio curiositatis*)" (p. 141). The divine, particularly Hebrew, origins of philosophy, continues the author, were also affirmed by St Cyril, who committed himself to the demonstration that "the more approved theology (*probator Theologia*)

¹⁰ The work was published together with two other writings by Gaudenzio in *De errore sectariorum huius temporis labyrintho. Conatus in Genesin Divinam novus. De philosophicis opinionibus Veterum Ecclesiae Patrum. Opuscula tria, Paganini Gaudentii S. Th. D. & Prothon. Apostolici* (Pisa, 1644), pp. 139–270.

and the better doctrines (*melioraque dogmata*) passed from the Hebrews to the Greeks" (p. 145). Now, observes Gaudenzio, it should be mentioned that, even if it were true that not all Greek philosophers attained their knowledge from Moses and from Hebrew literature, it is still certain that at least some of them, especially Plato, were inspired by accounts of the Hebrew revelation: "we must answer [objections] thus, by saying that not all who philosophized among the Greeks consulted Moses and received [their doctrines] from the Hebrews, but some did, and above all (*inprimis*) Plato" (p. 146). At a later point these philosophers tried to demonstrate rationally ("they sought to prove (*demonstrare*) it after their custom", p. 146) how much they had learned from the Hebrew revelation, and in particular the concept of Creation. The debate as to whether Moses had been instructed by the Egyptians (from which it would follow that the Greeks learned their wisdom from the Egyptians and not from the Hebrews) was resolved by Gaudenzio in a fairly categorical manner:

the Egyptians were taught by Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, so that the tradition stayed in that region and brought it about that those who went there became adepts of no insignificant (*non contemnenda*) portion of the teachings Moses had left behind. In this way, what he [Moses] learnt from the Egyptians, it would appear that they had first got from Abraham and his descendants (pp. 147-8).

Hebrew wisdom was more ancient, and all other wisdom, including the Egyptian and the Greek, was derived from it.

From this it could be argued that every nation, directly or indirectly, had drawn its knowledge from the pure sources of divine revelation. In particular it could seem that "Greek philosophy is consistent with the truth" (p. 148). In reality, observes Gaudenzio, the "primaeval and most ancient beauty of truth" (pp. 148-149) has been obscured, so that "it is right to condemn (*damnare*) the Gentiles' philosophy" (p. 149), which the Church Fathers have done many times.

To discuss the greater or lesser validity and importance of this or that philosophical sect is, however, completely useless, Gaudenzio asserts, above all because there are the great differences of opinion marking the various sects: "From this we learn that the Holy Fathers certainly did not think we should declare which sect among the Gentile philosophers is more renowned and better, since they bid the whole crowd of them begone". He continues ironically: "Yet today we argue much amongst ourselves about the schools of Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and Democritus" (p. 153).

Showing unexpectedly modern historiographical criteria, Gaudenzio wrote another work entitled *De Philosophiae apud Romanos initio et progressu volumen, in quo praeter historiam multa ad contemplationem rerum, et dissidentes Veterum Sapientum Scholas facientia, enarrantur*, 640 pp. ('Index capitum',

'Index rerum et verborum') (Pisa, 1643). The author, in a brief dissertation in the form of a preface introducing the work entitled 'De historia philosophica excolenda' (pp. 1-4), laments the fact that only Aristotle and some of his commentators are studied in school and all other great philosophers such as Plato, the Stoics and Pythagoras are neglected:

In the Schools at this time those who expound Aristotle and the secrets of philosophy . . . generally concentrate on the opinion of one teacher and ignore, neglect, and dismiss everything else. They do not value Plato enough to take even an occasional passing glance at him; they do not read the Stoics, but laugh at them; the Pythagoreans they deem unworthy of discussion (p. 2).

Gaudenzio goes on to criticize the fact that not only are these philosophers' theories neglected, but also the general account of their lives and the historical context of their thought: "It is no surprise that they not only spurn the chief opinions (*capitales sententiae*) of the other philosophers, but do not know about the lives of those who have philosophized, and consider superfluous the entire history of philosophical succession in all its complexity" (p. 2). This method of studying, observes the author, causes ignorance in adolescents: "How disgraceful it is not to know the fortunes of disciplines (*disciplinae*) all but divine. How ignorant he must be who, when asked who Plato was, or Aristotle, or Zeno, when he lived, into what era he fell, what was his allotted end, cannot reply, but gapes as if he had sacrificed to Harpocrates and would never speak again" (p. 2). The *virī sapientes* of antiquity did not behave in this way. In their works they deal with "the successive stages of philosophy, the lives of the philosophers, the kings, leading men, and commanders who either philosophized themselves, or embraced philosophers with their goodwill (*benevolentia*)" (p. 2).

The method and choice of argument with which Gaudenzio commenced the writing of his history of Roman philosophy was both innovative and polemical. He stated that the Roman nation had not left its descendants an inheritance of great philosophies. Amongst the philosophers reviewed were "writers who took pains to amplify the history of philosophy" (p. 2). The novelty of the expression *historia philosophica* which recurred again in this preliminary *dissertatiuncula* should be pointed out once more. After he presented his historiographical criteria, he stated precisely: "I did not hesitate to undertake this innovation in the history of philosophy. For so far, to my knowledge, no one had taken his pen to the illustration of such matter" (p. 3). Thus Gaudenzio wrote his history of Roman philosophy conscious that he was undertaking a new type of work. He preceded the work with a chronology, a *conspectus successionis philosophicae* (pp. 5-10), to facilitate its reading. He began with a debate on the origins of Roman philosophy, which, he noted, some people dated back to the time of king Numa Pompilius and which, according to ancient tradition, must have been formed

in the school of Pythagoras, the founder of Italic philosophy. According to Gaudenzio, this tradition appeared to be a *fabula*. He believed, following Livy, that Numa Pompilius was educated not by foreign but by indigenous "arts" ("instructed not by foreign arts, but by the harsh, grim discipline of the Sabines", p. 15) and in addition he noted that Pythagoras' arrival in Italy should instead be placed during the reign of king Servius Tullius. According to this chronology, Roman philosophy originated after the reign of Numa: "All these things show that philosophy had not set foot in Rome in Numa's time, but its beginning must be relegated to later ages" (p. 15).

He believed that the first person to bring philosophy to Rome was Panaetius of Rhodes, a follower of the Stoic Diogenes, the master of Scipio. A Stoic himself, he was the son of Nicagoras and was born in Rhodes and died in Athens. The information which Gaudenzio gives us is precise, accurate, and based on evidence from a wide number of sources such as the *Suda*, Paternulus, Cicero, and Polybius. After Panaetius, Gaudenzio placed Polybius, Scipio Africanus, under whom "philosophy flourished greatly at Rome" (p. 26), Caius Lelius, and Lucius Furius, thinkers of the Stoic school. He dated the first setback in the history of Roman philosophy to the famous *Senatusconsultus* of 155 B.C., when according to tradition the Greek philosophers who had come in a delegation to Rome were expelled from the city. In a critical spirit, Gaudenzio questioned this: "Would not this have been to disgrace (*dedecore*) and humiliate their close friend the city of Athens, which was always the seat of wisdom?" (p. 29). The author gave his own interpretation. The Senate had admonished Carneades and Diogenes

not to stay any longer in Rome, but to speed up their embassy and go home, because it was not the ancient custom to have permanent ambassadors. Thus it seems it had not been not primarily from a hatred of philosophy that they were sent away, but because they paid too much attention to enticing Roman youth to themselves and calling the young away from warfare and public business, behaving contrary to diplomatic custom (pp. 29-30).

According to Gaudenzio, one should not speak of the Greek philosophers' expulsion from Rome, but simply of a request, following the ancient custom, not to remain in the city for a long time once an embassy had been completed.

He thought the Romans registered a greater interest in philosophy once they were no longer constrained "to the roughness of a harsh and military life" (p. 44). Then finally "philosophy was admitted to Rome" (ch. 17, p. 44); and Roman philosophy was often expounded by obscure men whose names have not been handed down. Roman philosophy's golden age occurred during the time of Lucretius, whom he defined as the *magnus philosophus* and *magnus poeta* (ch. 29, p. 72), and of Cicero, than whom "none more eloquent (*non facundior*) has existed" (p. 92).

On the life and works :

Niceron, Vol. xxxi, pp. 108-23; BUAM, Vol. xxiii, pp. 308-10; F. Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti delle scienze fisiche accaduti in Toscana . . .* (Florence, 1870), Vol. i, p. 352; Vol. iii, pp. 146, 237; Hurter, Vol. iii, col. 1021 n. 1. On the activity of the publisher of the texts written by Gaudenzio cf. P. Zambelli, 'Aneddoti patriziani', *Rinascimento*, series II, Vol. vii (1967), pp. 314-16 (see n. 1 in particular). The census of Paganino Gaudenzio's Aristotelian commentaries is in C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 163-4.

On the reception :

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, I, ch. 2, § 9, p. 19; Struve, Vol. I, ch. 2, § 10, p. 93; ch. 3, § 1, p. 153; Heumann, III, pp. 631-41; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 29, § 1, pp. 163-4; Stolle, p. 465; Buhle, Vol. IV, p. 5; Tennemann, Vol. v, p. 400; Orloff, p. 168.

On the significance of his work :

F. Menghini, *Paganino Gaudenzio, letterato grigionese del '600* (Milan, 1941), in particular the chapter dedicated to the history of Roman philosophy, pp. 207-14; E. Garin, *Scienza e vita civile nel Rinascimento italiano* (Bari, 1965), p. 143 n. 21; Braun, p. 371; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 36 n. 78.

4.4. *Justus Lipsius (1547-1606)*

The well-known Flemish humanist and philologist, Joost Lips (Justus Lipsius), born in Overysse, Brussels, 1547, died in Louvain, 1606, also participated in the birth of philosophical historiography through two of his numerous works: *Manuductionis ad Stoicam philosophiam libri tres: L. Annaeo Senecae, aliisque scriptoribus illustrandis* (Antwerp, 1604) and *Physiologiae Stoicorum libri tres: L. Annaeo Senecae, aliisque scriptoribus illustrandis* (Paris, 1604). His activities were not limited to a mere discussion of general ideas concerning the history of philosophy; he also wrote a precise, accurate history of ancient philosophy (Bk. I of the *Manuductio*), as well as a historical exposition of Stoicism.

Lipsius' historiographical concept echoed the Renaissance one, whose principal characteristic was to imitate and popularize the erudite works of Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, Sextus Empiricus, Stobaeus, and Clement of Alexandria, all published several times during the course of the sixteenth century. In addition to this approach, common to the historians of his time, Lipsius also expressed his own personal convictions about the history of philosophy in general and Stoicism in particular. Above all he clearly acknowledged that he was a 'sectarian'. From the very first pages of the *Manuductio ad Stoicam philosophiam* the author declared his love for the Stoics, whom he held to be "the greatest and best of philosophers" (p. 301), and above all for their greatest representatives, Seneca and Epictetus. Seneca was constantly referred to as *Seneca noster* or more simply just *noster*. Opening his

discussion, the author invited the interlocutor in his dialogue (the outward form of the *Manuductio*) to recognize Seneca's supremacy among the wise: "You recognize Annaeus Seneca as a great man among great men" (p. 1). Stoic philosophy was defined as "noble thoughts (*magnanima*) and exalted speech (*altiloqua*)" (p. 53), and the school derived from it as "the bravest and most hallowed (*sanctissima*) sect" (p. 54). The marked resentment of certain pages directed towards detractors of Seneca and the Stoics is thus explained. His judgement on Cicero, for example, who had been critical of the Stoics, as were the "modern Aristotelians (*novelli Aristotelei*)" and Aristotle himself, appear less than fair. Referring to Cicero, he stated: "Cicero, he is common. We speak in vain of wisdom if we have recourse to him for our judge" (p. 43); and of the Aristotelians of his time: "of Seneca and Epicurus I may say openly that their writings seem rosebeds to me, in comparison with the thickets of the Lyceum" (p. 49). All the same, a love for wholesome and moderate views ("I bear witness that I love sound and sober things", 'Ad lectorem', fol. [2]v) prevented Lipsius from joining in "the vainglorious exaltation of one's own sect" or "the angry condemnation of other sects that can be observed among the Aristotelians and Platonists of the humanist period" (Dal Pra, *Note di storia della storiografia filosofica*, I: *Giusto Lipsio*, p. 173).

In addition to this mildly sectarian character, Lipsius' historiography contains marked philological interest. He diligently gathered together a great amount of material which he then arranged sometimes chronologically, sometimes logically. He himself affirmed that: "To dig these things out and arrange them (which no one else had done) was hard work" ('Ad lectorem', fol. [3]r). His work consisted chiefly of citations, of testimonies and precepts that he had gathered from the whole range of Greek and Latin classical literature. It might be said that this continuous philological preoccupation prevented Lipsius' historiography from arriving at a synthetic vision of philosophy and its development throughout the centuries.

Another conviction lay at the basis of Lipsius' approach: the belief in the pluralism of philosophical doctrines. According to Lipsius' view, the history of philosophy had been the history of many different philosophical sects, schools or currents; all of them had provided some positive elements whether they flourished before or after the birth of Christ. God's providential plan had distributed truth fairly throughout the centuries. For this reason, Lipsius believed, one should not blindly follow this or that master or school (a rule derived from 'his' Seneca, whose faithful follower he openly and repeatedly professed himself to be). In fact according to this great master of Roman Stoicism, philosophers are simply "leaders" — as Lipsius liked to record punctiliously — not "our lords": "I stand up (*adsurgo*) in reverence for the discoveries (*inventae*) and the discoverers (*inventores*) of wisdom; but as a man for a man, and men who are not our lords (*non domini nostri*) but our leaders (*duces sunt*)" (pp. 11-12). The logical result of this way of thinking

made a philosopher prepared to gather truth from any quarter from which it may have emanated. Again it is Seneca who recommended the acceptance of debate and pluralism within philosophy, and supported the idea of a so-called eclectic sect: "we should not adhere strictly to one man, nor indeed one sect . . . there is one sect in which, in my judgement, we may safely enrol. It is the Eclectic (let me translate it 'Elective'), which was founded by one Potamon of Alexandria, very much to my liking" (p. 12).

This approach underlay the entire history of ancient philosophy as it was traced in the first book of the *Manuductio*. When he described the origin and first historic development of philosophical wisdom, Lipsius did not move away from the historiography of the time, which usually went back to Patristic notions, particularly Augustine's and Clement of Alexandria's, in the defence of philosophy's non-Greek origins.

For Lipsius, the history of ancient learning recorded three philosophical sects: Barbarian, Italic and Graecian.

'Barbarian' philosophy "existed outside Greece and Italy, and was very ancient" (p. 13). There was no doubt that it was of divine origin; in fact it traced its origins to prehistoric man, "rather it came from God himself (*Deo ipso*)" (p. 13). God created Adam in his own image, infused him with his wisdom and engaged in intimate conversation with him. For this reason Adam possessed an extraordinary knowledge of the world's creation: Adam "who viewed and knew so many new works in heaven, earth, and sea; why should he not, I say, have been imbued with more varied and deeper knowledge?" (p. 13). When Adam fell into sinful ways he lost this extraordinary wisdom and knowledge of things of this world: "hardly anything else remained but, as it were, sparks from a great fire, hidden in the tinder of the mind, and smothered under the ashes" (p. 13). From that time knowledge and wisdom ceased to be a gift distributed freely by God to mankind, and became a good to be acquired strenuously and then transmitted to one's descendants. Adam did this by communicating the knowledge he had attained to his sons. He had the first, Seth, engrave everything he had learnt from his father on two pillars, "one of stone, the other of brick, so that the former should survive the waters, the latter the fire" (p. 13), in order that this wisdom should not be lost in case of some general cataclysm. Other links in the transmission of ancient wisdom were formed by the patriarch Noah and his father, who lived in Adam's time. According to the scheme laid down by Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, Bk. VIII, learning was spread in this way "to the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Indians, Persians, Scythians, Gauls, Celts, and whatever men there were elsewhere" (p. 14). A prominent place in this history was occupied by the Jews, who inherited an uninterrupted tradition of wisdom from their father Abraham and from Moses (who liberated them from slavery in Egypt); this tradition was guarded jealously and transmitted by their prophets, by the priests of the temple in Jerusalem, and by the Essene, Sadducean, and Pharisaic sects.

The second philosophical sect was the 'Italic', "which was derived from the Barbarian sect and is nearest to it" (p. 16). Its origins could be traced back to Pythagoras, "a great man of outstanding intellect and judgement" (p. 16). In keeping with his painstaking philological method, Lipsius lined up all the texts about the age of Pythagoras, his place of birth, the journeys and pilgrimages he undertook, and the developments of the school he founded in that southern part of Italy known as *Magna Graecia*. Literary and histori-

cal evidence was provided by Pliny, Dionysius, Livy, Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Augustine, Jerome, Clement of Alexandria, Apuleius, Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius, the *Suda*, Claudianus Mamertus, Josephus, and Seneca.

The third ancient philosophical sect, named 'Graecian', was divided into three distinct periods: 'poetic', 'Ionian' and 'Eleatic' philosophy. 'Poetic' philosophy represented the most ancient thought in this "nation of philosophers". It included the ancient poets Musaeus, Linus, Orpheus, Hesiod, and Homer. Lipsius affirmed that they "certainly cultivated the study of wisdom, and spread far and wide what they had learnt, but did so in verse, and covered many things with the veils of fables" (p. 22). Homer was the greatest of these poet philosophers; he was due "the prize for intellect (*palma ingeniorum*)" (p. 22). The 'Ionian' school was begun by Thales, who not only, according to some sources, obtained wisdom from the barbarians ("Thus it is true that he too drank from the barbarian fount", p. 23), but was even, according to others, a barbarian himself, a native of Phoenicia, a country bordering on Judea. The seven sages of antiquity are also mentioned as well as Thales' successors Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Anaxagoras, "who first transferred his school from Miletus to Athens" (p. 24). The succession within the Ionian school continued in the city of Athens with Archelaus, who, according to widespread ancient belief, was Socrates' teacher. Until Socrates, the Ionians were only interested in cosmological matters ("this sect . . . was given only to physics (*Physicis*)", p. 25); "he introduced ethics; that is what they mean by saying that he brought philosophy down from heaven to earth" (p. 25). New schools arose based on Socrates' teaching and new disciples as well, who according to Socratic terminology were philosophers (that is, lovers of wisdom). In so far as it is possible to reconstruct what Lipsius refers to as the "Socratic family tree (*Stemma*)", with all its "branches or bends" (p. 25), it included the Cyrenaics with Aristippus, the school of Elis with Phaedo, the Megarians with Euclid, the Cynics with Antisthenes, and finally Plato with the ancient, middle and new Academies. The Eleatic school constituted the third branch of the so-called Graecian philosophy. The table of Eleatic philosophers was reconstructed by Lipsius on the lines laid down by Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromata* ("but I, though following others, have followed Clement above all", p. 29): Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Melissus, Leucippus, and Democritus, from whom would come Protagoras of Abdera and Metrodorus of Chios; and from the latter Diogenes of Smyrna, Anaxarchus of Abdera, Pyrrho of Elis, Nausiphanes, and Epicurus, the founder of the 'Garden'. This schematic reconstruction of the Eleatic school was followed by a brief, critical reflection in which Lipsius observed how Diogenes Laertius and Strabo confused the Eleatic sect "with the Italic or Pythagorean sect" (p. 29). At the conclusion of his exposition of 'Graecian' philosophy, Lipsius affirmed its dependence on barbarian learning, as he had earlier with Italic philosophy:

do you not see that its leaders were barbarians? Orpheus was from Thrace, Homer from Egypt (as many say; he was certainly taught there), many from Africa. Indeed Cyrene alone produced more than Athens itself, and great and famous men. But Cyrene marches with Egypt, and Egypt with Judea; to sum up in a word, wisdom came from the East (*ab Oriente sapientia orta*) (p. 29).

The last part of Lipsius' history of ancient philosophy was dedicated to the Stoic sect. He declared that in organizing his book he reserved a particular place for them because they are "the greatest (*maximi*) and best (*optimi*) of philosophers" (p. 30). Yet even in this section the historiographical

technique remains unchanged. The origins and historical development of Stoic philosophy are shown in a succession of philosophers and heads of schools, with only brief notes on their lives and the particular aspects of their doctrine. On the basis of evidence by Strabo, Diogenes Laertius, the *Suda*, and Cicero, he paid some attention to the question of where Zeno of Citium, the founder of the school, was born. He celebrated Zeno's many virtues and austere lifestyle in a general way: "an abstemious, strict life, quite close to austerity and poverty (*inopiae propior*)" (p. 31); and again: "when wealth and gifts were to hand he forbore or rather spurned them" (p. 31); "In his life, conduct, speech, and dress severe or, for those who interpreted awry, austere" (p. 31). He then listed Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Zeno of Sidon, Diogenes of Babylon, Antipater of Sidon, Panaetius, and Posidonius, and then Persaeus, Herillus, Aristo, Athenodorus, Sphaerus, Zenodotus, Archedemus, and Sotion; all these philosophers were mentioned both for their admirable lives and for the wisdom of their teaching. Yet Lipsius did not manage to record the progressive development which Stoic philosophy underwent from philosopher to philosopher during its history (cf. Dal Pra, *Note di storia della storiografia filosofica, I: Giusto Lipsio*, p. 181). Lipsius put forward the relevant historiographical theory that the Stoics are descended from the Cynics; they are even "almost the same" (p. 42). Seneca, in his concise way, discovered the characteristics peculiar to both sects: "Our Seneca," wrote Lipsius "put it clearly: the Stoics overcame human nature, the Cynics surpassed it (*naturam Stoicos vincere, Cynicos excedere*)" (p. 45). Praise of the Stoics is mingled at this point with praise of the Cynics, who, in the austerity of their lifestyle, resembled "Capuchins" (p. 46): "a pattern of true virtue, patience, poverty, and (what the ancients lacked) piety" (p. 46). However, the Stoic doctrine was more highly esteemed by Lipsius because "our Stoics encompassed all aspects both in their minds and in their writing" (p. 52). They taught logic, physics, and ethics. Thus their teaching served as a guide not only to knowledge of the world but also to the way in which one's life should be conducted: "all things . . . are directed towards ethics, which is truly our belief, and the goal of genuine (*germanae*) philosophy; they do not lead the reader anywhere else, but to Integrity (*Honestum*) and Virtue" (p. 52). Finally, particular praise was reserved for the two greatest representatives of Roman Stoicism, Seneca and Epictetus. Lipsius examined not only Seneca's moral thought but also his life, which had been the subject of many slanderous insinuations. Talking of the latter, he mentioned particularly the noble behaviour and profound thought that had been handed down to us in his brief but important works.

On the life and works:

Adam, Vol. [iv], pp. 216-23; Imperiali, pp. 120-21; Freher, Vol. II, pp. 1501-2; Nicéron, Vol. xxiv, pp. 105-38; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 2464-6; Jöcher (Erg.), Vol. III, coll. 1931-8;

BUAM, Vol. xxiv, pp. 590–94; Van Der Aa, Vol. iv, pp. 156–60; Hurter, Vol. iii, coll. 425–6; ADB, Vol. xviii, pp. 741–5. Items on Lipsius are, however, present in every encyclopaedia of general culture. There is a nineteenth-century bibliography of Lipsius by F. Van Der Haeghen, *Bibliographie lipsienne*, 3 vols. (the first two relative to Lipsius' works, the third to the Latin authors published and/or annotated by Lipsius) (Ghent, 1886–8). For the editions of Seneca edited by Lipsius, see also P. Feider, *Études sur Sénèque* (Ghent, 1921).

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, I, ch. 4, § 2, p. 23; II, ch. 8, § 1, p. 192; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 13, p. 229; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 26, § 4, pp. 144–5; Stolle, pp. 642, 451–2, 719; Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 921; Buonafede, *Della restaurazione*, Vol. 1, p. 95; Buhle, Vol. VI, pp. 288–92 (an exposition of Lipsius' thought); I, p. 445; VI, pp. 264, 291; Tenne-mann, Vol. IV, pp. 448, 450; V, p. 401; Ortloff, p. 151.

On the significance of his works:

C. Nisard, *Le triumvirat littéraire au XVI^{ième} siècle: Just Lipse, Joseph Scaliger et Isaac Casaubon* (Paris, 1852); A. Steuer, *Die Philosophie des Justus Lipsius* (J.T. diss.; Muenster, 1901); Sandys, II, pp. 301–5; V. Beonio Brocchieri, 'L'individuo, il diritto e lo stato nella filosofia politica di Giusto Lipsio', in *Saggi critici di storia delle dottrine politiche* (Bologna, 1931), pp. 31–93; V. A. Nordman, *Justus Lipsius als Geschichtsforscher und Geschichtslehrer: Eine Untersuchung* (Helsinki, 1932); J. L. Saunders, *Justus Lipsius: The philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism* (New York, 1955) (with selected bibliography); Wilamowitz, pp. 56–7; Braun, p. 56; G. Oestreich, 'Justus Lipsius als Universalgelehrter zwischen Renaissance und Barock', in *Leiden University in the seventeenth Century: An Exchange of Learning* (Leiden, 1975), pp. 177–201; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 25 n. 49; Del Torre, pp. 12, 14, 22, 44. A specific study of Lipsius' philosophical historiography is M. Dal Pra, *Note di storia della storiografia filosofica*, I: *Giusto Lipsio*, R[C]SF, I (1946), pp. 163–88; see also B. P. Copenhagen and C. B. Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 260–69.

4.5. Daniël Heinsius (1580–1655)

Daniël Heins (Heinsius), one of Joseph Justus Scaliger's favourite pupils, was principally an academic, a professor at the University of Leiden, which had become famous during the first half of the seventeenth century not only because of his own teaching, but also because of numerous other scholars such as Justus Lipsius, Hugo Grotius and Scaliger himself.

In the history of the historiography of philosophy he is usually remembered for his *Peplus Graecorum epigrammatum, in quo omnes celebriores Graeciae philosophi, encomia eorum, vita et opiniones recensentur aut exponuntur*, 32 pp. (Leiden, 1613), a sort of history of philosophy in Greek verse, inspired by the poetic compositions that Diogenes Laertius and Aristotle had devoted to ancient philosophers. The dedication to Hugo Grotius proposes a return to this method of writing the history of philosophy in the seventeenth century, and sets it against the context of the rebirth of Greek versification that had occurred in Renaissance Italy and France. Thus we are describing a work that does not consider the

historical development of the Greek sects but concentrates in a fragmentary manner on the morality of single authors, and on their characters and style (cf. 'Epistola dedicatoria Amplissimo clarissimoque viro Hugoni Grotio, Hollandiae ac Zelandiae fisci patrono', which prefixes the work). The authors dealt with in the *Peplus* are: Homer, Hesiod, Thales, Solon, Cleobulus, Periander, Chilon, Pittacus, Bias, Anacharsis, Mison of Chena, Epimenides, Pherecydes, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Xenophon, Phaedo the Socratic, Plato, Maximus of Tyre, Arcesilaus and Lacidas, Aristippus, Bion, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Antisthenes, Diogenes the Cynic, Menippus the Cynic, Menedemus the Cynic, the Stoics, Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Epictetus, the Pythagoreans, Empedocles, Epicharmus, Timaeus of Locri, Parmenides of Elea, Eudoxus, Heraclitus, Democritus, Xenophanes, Melissus, Zeno of Elea, Anaxarchus, Pyrrho, Epicurus, and Timon of Phlius.

We wish to concentrate here on three of his academic orations and dissertations, collected and published by himself,¹¹ which present theses on the history of philosophy closely linked to the cultural debate of the time. The first oration is on the life and thought of Socrates ('Socrates, sive, De doctrina et moribus Socratis. . . . Oratio XXI', pp. 243–68); the second is on Stoic philosophy ('De Stoica Philosophia. Oratio XXIV', pp. 275–304); the third addresses the question of how ancient philosophers made use of the work of poets ('Pindari Pythiis praemissa: in qua ostenditur, quomodo veteres Philosophi Poetarum scriptis sint usi, Oratio XXVIII', pp. 357–72).

The first dissertation opens with a celebration of wisdom, placed by God in the soul of man: "In this body of ours that immeasurable artificer (*artifex*) and architect of the universe placed nothing more excellent than the mind, and in that nothing greater than wisdom" (p. 243). As the life of man is divided into various ages, so is the history of wisdom: "First born among barbarians, then brought up and educated among the Greeks, it gained strength along with its authors and vigour because of public support" (p. 243). Thus Heinsius joined forces not only with those who held generically to the theory of wisdom's divine nature, but also and more particularly with those who claimed that wisdom began with the so-called barbarians — that over the centuries wisdom had manifested itself in different ways. Poets had clothed it in fables and myths, Pythagoras in aphorisms (*in brevissimis quibusdam dictis*, p. 243), while Heraclitus with great ingenuity concealed it from the eyes of the unsophisticated so that it should not be profaned. Finally it came to rest with the Athenians "and halted in Socrates' wit (*urbanitas*)" (p. 243), who first "like a bridegroom brought her to earth and among men" (p. 244). Wisdom raised men's standards, "established homes and families, and formed republics" (p. 244). After this historical *excursus*, Heinsius then gives an account of Socrates' life which he took mostly from Diogenes Laertius, as he himself declares in the subheading to his scholarly dissertation: 'Habita, cum vitam illius philosophi a Diogene Laertio descriptam, inchoaturus esset'.

¹¹ Reference is made here to the edition edited by his son Nicholas: Daniel Heinsius, *Orationum editio nova, prioribus auctor. Accedunt Dissertationes aliquot, cum nonnullis Praefationibus*, ed. Nicolaus Heinsius (Amsterdam, 1657).

The oration on Stoic philosophy (Heinsius may be considered one of those who restored this current of ancient thought in the seventeenth century) is not truly historiographical. More than anything else it is an exhortation to embrace Stoic wisdom, defined as "august", "masculine", "spirited", and "mistress (*domina*) and chief (*princeps*) of all disciplines" (p. 303). For this reason much of the work is devoted to the celebration of the ideals of the Stoic, imperturbable and always happy, who "alone always follows the good, alone always shuns and avoids the bad" (p. 279). This work is a markedly proselytizing one, an invitation to embrace Stoic ethics. Here and there it contains references to the great interpreters of Stoic wisdom, who had existed even before Zeno of Citium founded his school. Among them are the mythical Ulysses and Hercules, "whom those unbending (*rigidi*) masters from the Porch made the patrons of their sect, and as it were the tutelary gods of their opinions, since both seemed born to miseries, misfortunes, and labours" (p. 280). Diogenes, who imperturbably welcomed Alexander the Great as he was about to storm his city, was also a Stoic. Heinsius' oration mentions as well the sage Epictetus and the celebrated ancients who judged as good only "that which is right (*honestum*)" and bad "that which is linked to disgrace" (p. 297), such as Marcus Attilius Regulus, Socrates, Mucius Scaevola, Cato of Utica, Democritus. Considered *princeps* among wise men according to Hippocrates was Anaxarchus, who "when he fell into the hands of a most cruel tyrant, of whom at another time he had spoken with great freedom (*liberrime*), was thrown naked into a hollowed rock" (p. 301). He includes among the Stoics the Spartan youth, "who with extreme constancy and fortitude allowed their bodies to be torn and rent with rods, without even the slightest movement of pain" (p. 302), and fearless Roman women. In short, concludes the author, "he cannot be conquered by pain who does not consider (*arbitratur*) himself ill used" (p. 302).

The third oration, where Heinsius demonstrates "how the ancient philosophers used the writings of poets" (pp. 357 ff.), is no less interesting. He does not defend his thesis by a systematic, articulated historical *excursus* but with explanatory examples, as he had in the previous dissertation on Stoic philosophy. "I see our Plato, when discussing the immortality of souls, in this most serious discussion (*in gravissima hac disputatione*) citing Pindar" (p. 359). Poetic works have a particular quality, instilling virtue into the soul ("they instil (*instillant*) virtue into minds", p. 361). Ancient philosophers recognized this great power in poetry; indeed, according to the Platonists, "Poetry is philosophy, old in time, metrical in composition, indeed fabulous in meaning (*sensu vero fabulosa*); philosophy is poetry more recent in time, plainer in sense (*sensus planior*)" (p. 371). Both poetry and philosophy should therefore be considered as wisdom "the one modern (*altera recente*)", "the other ancient (*altera antiqua*)" (p. 371).

On the life and works :

Freher, Vol. II, pp. 1539–40; Jöcher, Vol. II, coll. 1455–6; BUAM, Vol. XIX, pp. 64–8; Van Der Aa, Vol. III, pp. 129–35 (with full bibliography). From Heinsius' library there exists the *Catalogus variorum et exquisitissimorum librorum nobilissimi doctissimique viri Danielis Heinsii, D. Marci equitis etc.*, 136 pp. (Leiden, 1655). The census of Aristotelian commentaries by Heinsius is in C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 186–7.

On the reception :

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, I, ch. 7, § 21, pp. 42–3; Struve, Vol. I, ch. 3, § 1, p. 156; § 10, p. 217; § 13, p. 230; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 789–91 (review of the *Peplus Graecorum epigrammatum*); Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 28, § 1, p. 153; Stolle, pp. 451, 439; Brucker, Vol. I, p. 894; Buonafede, *Della restaurazione*, Vol. I, pp. 98–9; Orloff, p. 23, 110.

On the significance of his work :

Sandys, Vol. II, pp. 313–15; Wilamowitz, p. 67; Braun, p. 67; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 26 n. 52; Del Torre, p. 44. On the seventeenth-century Dutch scholars and men of letters see P. H. Peerlkamp, *Liber de vita, doctrina et facultate Nederlandorum qui carmina Latina composuerunt* (2nd edn; Harlem, 1838).

4.6. Sébastien Basson

Syntheses and partial recapitulations of the history of ancient philosophy are to be found not only in theoretical works by Aristotelians, but also in literary works by the anti-Aristotelians of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The French physician Sébastien Basson (Basso, Bassonus), was one of the most ardent *novatores* of the first decades of the seventeenth century, a declared anti-Aristotelian and a supporter of atomic theories in his study of nature. (More detailed biographical information does not exist. Cf. Zanier, *Il macrocosmo corpuscolaristico di Sebastiano Basson*, p. 79 n. 2). Before presenting his concepts on physics in *Philosophiae naturalis adversus Aristotelem libri XII. In quibus abstrusa Veterum Physiologia restauratur et Aristotelis errores solidis rationibus refelluntur* (Orleans, 1621), he offers an exposition 'De variis philosophorum sententiis' (pp. 1–17).

He begins his treatment by defining exactly what should be understood by the word 'nature': "by Nature we understand that internal principle whereby any thing on the one hand exists and continues to exist, on the other has the power of acting, undergoing, and ceasing" (p. 1). In a second article Basson asks himself "what that innermost (*intimum*) principle of a thing is, and whether it is one or more, and what they are" (p. 4). He describes the history of philosophy as containing two camps: Aristotle on one side, and the pre-Aristotelians on the other. For Aristotle, the principles which joined together to constitute the nature of being were two: matter and form. For the *Veteres*, however, this had not been so: "Empedocles, Democritus,

Anaxagoras, and many other renowned philosophers, and Plato himself, posited as their prime matter divers very slender (*tenuissimae*) natures, from which, when they were joined in different ways, things were made as a house arising out of stone, mud, and bricks" (pp. 8–9). The ancients were agreed on a general, corpuscular idea of matter, which resolved the problem of the multiplicity of objects, but they disagreed on the definition of the corpuscles or atoms which composed this matter. Now, observes the author, with obvious impatience at the methods used by Aristotle's followers when they wrote the history of philosophy, it seems neither useful nor possible to report the opinion of each pre-Aristotelian philosopher: "Nor is it possible [to state] the opinions of all the ancients (which would be long-winded and of little use)" (p. 13). It is enough to know that "things are constructed out of tiny and highly diverse particles (*ex minimis, diversissimisque particulis*) that, just as they had unlike natures when separated from each other, they retain that difference of nature, by whatever name you call those things" (p. 14). Thus for the ancients, reality had a clearly atomistic or corpuscular structure, a theory which Basson embraced with conviction and enthusiasm in direct opposition to Aristotle's ontological doctrine. He described matter as having been broken down into corpuscles "created, indestructible, indefinitely different, capable of arranging themselves in ever-changing structures, thus provoking those alterations which Aristotelian philosophy considered 'substantial' and explained through the action of forms". (Gregory, 'Studi sull'atomismo del Seicento, I: Sebastiano Basson', p. 52).

On the life and works:

Jöcher, Vol. 1, col. 847; C. Vasoli, 'Basso, Sebastiano', in DBI, Vol. VII, pp. 149–50 (with retrospective bibliography); DSB, Vol. 1, p. 495 (with retrospective bibliography).

On the reception:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. II, ch. II, § 2, p. 206; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 939–48; Tennemann, Vol. III, p. 437.

On the significance of his work:

W. Brugger, 'De Sebastiano Basso occasionalismo praeludente (1621)', *Gregorianum*, XIV (1933), pp. 521–39; T. Gregory, 'Studi sull'atomismo del Seicento, I: Sebastiano Basson', *GCFL*, XVIII (1964), pp. 38–65; Braun, p. 370; G. Zanier, 'Il macrocosmo corpuscolaristico di Sebastiano Basson', in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento: Atti del Convegno di studio di Santa Margherita Ligure (14–16 ottobre 1976)* (Florence, 1977), pp. 77–118.

4.7. Jean Chrysostome Magnen (c.1590–c.1679)*

Jean Chrysostome Magnen was born at Leuxeuil-les-Bains in Burgundy, obtaining his degree in medicine at the University of Dôle. He practised as

* by Francesco Bottin.

a doctor in Italy, where he must have had a good reputation, as he was made a professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Pavia. He later obtained the chair of philosophy at the same university. His dates of birth and of death are unknown (c.1590–c.1679).

Magnen's principal work is the *Democritus reviviscens, sive vita et philosophia Democriti*, published for the first time in Pavia in 1646 and then reprinted several times: in Leiden in 1648, in The Hague in 1658 and in London in the same year (the edition used in the present study).

The *Democritus reviviscens* had a wide circulation, especially in scientific circles, where together with a similar work on Epicurus by Gassendi it was regarded as an attempt to construct physics on a different basis to the Aristotelian one. It is clear, therefore, that Magnen's design was part of the philosophical tendency to look upon the recovery of past philosophies as a stimulus and aid to contemporary speculation.

In the preface Magnen records that Democritus' "very wise (*sapientissima*) teaching . . . had long demanded an interpreter or a defence (*apologia*)" (fol. *3^r) and confesses that

when the more venerable and older (*senior*) wisdom had, with a great deal of water, cast off its filth and reclaimed its serene and natural countenance, then it seemed to me of a majesty all but worthy of worship, and it adduced one argument in its favour, namely that of being closer to the origin, that is, eternal truth. It had wandered somewhat less far from it than younger wisdom (*sophia*); and it brought forward the atomic theory as a great and prizewinning achievement (*grande palmariumque mentium humanarum opus*) of the human mind, and left me entranced (*defixum*) by this conception of atoms. It certainly seemed worthy of proceeding from the mouth of the more ancient wisdom (*sapientiae*) herself (fols. *3^v–*4^r).

Democritus' atomic doctrine, therefore, seemed to him to originate from sources of ancient wisdom, and for that reason is worthy of attentive study even in the present century: "Therefore I determined to restore Democritus to the light of our times and be the usher for so great (*celeberrimus*) a philosopher to enter an age thronged by so many philosophers, and to be granted posthumous life" (fol. *4^r).

Magnen's preface continues with some *prolegomena* (pp. 1–44) in which he presents Democritus' life (pp. 11–13), a complete list of his works (pp. 13–24), and a brief exposition of his doctrine obtained from the various testimonies available (pp. 24–44). He collected any relevant information and anecdotes in these *prolegomena* in order to provide exhaustive information on ancient philosophy. In the biographical notes Magnen insisted in his own unique way on the contacts Democritus would have had with scholarly Persians and Chaldeans when he lived in his father's house (his father was of noble origin). These Persians and Chaldeans "initiated Democritus into the mysteries (*mysteria*) of divine, celestial knowledge (*scientia*)" (p. 2). Upon his

father's death, Democritus used up his inheritance on numerous journeys to Egypt, where he listened to gymnosophists and priests, to the interior of Asia, among the Chaldeans, and to Arabia, India, and Ethiopia. Returning to his own country, he dedicated himself until his old age to study and meditation. He composed his numerous works in the most absolute tranquillity and succeeded Leucippus in the *secta italica*.

Only after these *prolegomena* does *Democritus reviviscens* really and truly begin. This too, however, is preceded by a preface (pp. 45-9) in which Magnen explains the scope and the limits of his project of bringing Democritus' ancient philosophy back to life, and outlines the method he has followed. Magnen states:

Our age has produced three kinds of philosophers: some are devotees of a particular author, by whose words they are shackled as if by a chain of steel (*catena quadam adamantina*) . . . others are champions of philosophical freedom, who weigh no man's authority and every man's arguments (*rationes*) . . . the third kind of philosopher, having either scorned or toyed with younger opinions, goes back to an aged and crone-like philosophy and inquire whether in its own day it had any beauty or strength, though now it is a torch that has crumbled into ashes (pp. 45-7).

He characterized the first group as including the Aristotelians, scholastics, and followers of an author who founded a school to which they then remained faithful, limiting themselves to explanations of the works of their masters. The second group might be subdivided into various categories according to the intentions of individual thinkers: "And these you may well divide into various classes: some are seekers after novelties (*novorum curiosi sunt*), aware how little certainty there is in ordinary (*vulgata*) philosophy; others have ambitions to be called heads of schools; a few hold fast to nobody's opinions, not even their own, and give room to truth alone" (p. 46). To this group belonged thinkers such as Paracelsus and Campanella, who criticized their predecessors; thinkers like Fludd and many of the 'chymical' philosophers who posed as heads of schools; and true friends of truth such as Tycho Brahe, Kepler and Galileo, who rejected all authorities. To the third group, finally, belong those thinkers who prefer to disregard doctrines taught to young people at school, either because they look down on them or because they have already taken them in and prefer to test the relevance of other, neglected doctrines. Among these Magnen mentions Copernicus who revived the work of Aristarchus of Samos, Marsilio Ficino who revived the work of Plato, and himself who aims to revive the work of Democritus.

The author is careful not to state that the activities of any one group are better, and limits himself to the conclusion that "If you ask me to judge these three schools (*sectae*), I shall say that all are owed their proper honour, but the best one worships the sun of truth alone" (p. 47). Immediately afterwards

he adds: "But for teaching the young, it is better to lecture on Aristotle, since his method and tenets are beyond all objection" (p. 47). For this reason he maintained that it was right for Aristotelian philosophy to be studied in schools and cultivated with particular interest, since "we have no better philosopher", and since Plato himself is "very sketchy (*parcus*) and unsystematic (*nec ordinatus*)" (p. 47) in natural science.

Magnen insisted that he did not wish to oppose Democritus and Aristotle, as taught in schools, but rather to perform a work of restoration on a philosopher who has been unjustly neglected:

Hence, when I decided that I should restore Democritus' philosophy, I undertook the task first of all from the desire for truth and in order to exercise my mind; secondly, as there can be no time-limit in philosophy, I thought it would not be out of place to restore to their former position those opinions that first flourished . . . But these doctrines will be confined to my private study (*privatum studium*), nor shall any other philosopher climb into the Regius chair with me apart from Aristotle; for in public lectures one must attend to the instruction of youth, not indulge one's own taste (*genius*) for novelty (*novitas*) (p. 48).

Beyond this, continued Magnen, his aim was not to refute the opponents of atomism in any definite way ("perhaps someone will expect arguments on Democritus' behalf that leave the opponent dumbfounded or in despair") (p. 49), but simply to illustrate the Greek philosopher's arguments. He followed a geometrical method in his work; thus it appears to have a fairly complicated structure similar to Euclid's *Elements*. Magnen was convinced that "a person who knows no mathematics will do nothing great in philosophy; certainly he will not grasp the most subtle science of atoms, let alone be borne to its ultimate mysteries (*suprema mysteria*)" (p. 52). The work is divided into three *disputationes*: 'an detur materia prima diversa ab elementis', 'de compositione rerum ex atomis', 'de consequentiis ex Democriti philosophia deductis'. In its turn each *disputatio* is preceded by *definitiones*, *principia*, and *postulata* to render an exact exposition of atomic doctrine, which was also demonstrated geometrically. Within each *disputatio* the exposition of Democritus' thought was arranged in various chapters which were continually interpolated with *obiectiones* and *lemmata* in order to confront all the problems presented by the Atomic theory. A most interesting and original digression was dedicated to *Democritus docens* (pp. 305-12), "or a model for explaining any difficulties by the atomic theory", in which he demonstrated how corpuscular theory could be widely applied to explain such differing facts as insomnia or frightening dreams.

Returning to the content of the *disputationes*, Magnen discussed the nature of matter (this proved to be particularly difficult because there was no direct way of understanding the primordial elements that composed the universe). As he said, according to the judgement of seventeenth-century thinkers, even Aristotle, while showing himself extraordinarily ingenious in solving other problems, erroneously introduced the doctrine of prime matter in this subject, which he had probably derived from Egyptian doctrines: "[Aristo-

tle] in his fourth production (i.e., in the method he used to establish the noble legend of prime matter, which Laertius [Bk. 1, § 10] bears witness that the Greeks derived from Egypt) did not sufficiently turn his back on that mental faculty which some Platonists elegantly call erratic" (p. 58). Thus the doctrine of prime matter was for Magnen nothing more than a noble legend. He proposed to demonstrate that this concept of matter should be identified with the elements themselves, which he reduced to only three (earth, water, and fire), since air, "as it is neither . . . united with the other elements, nor do any of the prime qualities attach to it" (p. 116), it could not be considered an element. Prime matter, therefore, is of no use in the empirical sciences: "the doctor (*medicus*) considers the elements only in bodies, and the natural philosopher (*physicus*) cannot demonstrate any necessity for Aristotelian prime matter; hence, since nothing in nature happens in vain (*frustra*), we must conclude that no such matter exists" (p. 79).

In the second *disputatio*, Magnen explained the atomistic doctrine about the composition of all reality by means of atoms. The third *disputatio* is dedicated to the laws of physics that derive from this atomic conception. It should be pointed out that, unlike Democritus, he denied the existence of the vacuum, and upheld the substantial forms of Aristotelian philosophy which he has inhere directly in the atoms. So the new physics, while proposed as an alternative to Aristotle's, remained linked to it in several respects, with the consequence that Magnen's revision of atomism is generally considered to be a limited one. However, it is sometimes included among the currents, popular in his century, that put forward an alternative to an excessively rigorous scientific mechanism by introducing numerous qualitative considerations.

On the life:

BUAM, Vol. xxvi, pp. 43-4; DSB, Vol. ix, pp. 14-15.

On the thought:

J. Güsgens, *Die Naturphilosophie des Joannes Chrysostomus Magnenus* (Bonn, 1910); G. B. Stones, 'The Atomic View of Matter in the XVth, XVIth and XVIIIth Centuries', *Isis*, x (1928), pp. 458-9; U. Baldini, 'Il corpuscolarismo italiano del Seicento: Problemi di metodo e prospettive di ricerca', in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento: Atti del Convegno di studio di Santa Margherita Ligure (14-16 ottobre 1976)* (Florence, 1977), pp. 1-76.

4.8. Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655)*

Pierre Gassendi (Champtercier, Provence, 1592-Paris, 1655) was not only a man of the church (first canon, then provost at Digne) but also professor of philosophy at the University of Aix-en-Provence from 1616 to 1622. In

* by Francesco Bottin.

constant controversy with Aristotelians and scholastics of his time, he became one of the most enthusiastic supporters of Epicurean thought in the seventeenth century.

Historical reflections in Gassendi's works are always closely linked to his general philosophical purpose; he contrasted history or experimental truth or science continually with knowledge obtained through proofs *per causas*. Thus Gassendi tried to establish that the only possibilities we have of arriving at truth are through the senses (*veritas experimentalis*) or through historical knowledge (*veritas historica*). His vast historical investigations into past thinkers which he presented in many of his works are part of this second aspect of his philosophical and scientific method. He followed the custom of giving precedence to individual philosophical treatments of a theoretical nature instead of writing a preliminary, historic synthesis.

This historical interest is most evident in *Exercitationes paradoxicae adversus Aristoteleos*; *Philosophiae Epicuri syntagma*; *Diogenis Laertii liber decimus, qui est de vita, moribus, placitisque Epicuri philosophi Atheniensis, cum nova interpretatione et notis*. Also interesting are the short histories of philosophy and logic which appear in the *Syntagma philosophicum* entitled 'De philosophia universe' and 'De logicae origine et varietate liber unus'.¹²

In the *Exercitationes*, which return to themes of Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *Examen vanitatis doctrinae gentium et veritatis christianae disciplinae* and to many other texts typical of humanist antischolastic polemic, Gassendi reproved the Aristotelians for reducing philosophy to a conglomeration of precepts and rules put together like summary outlines of Aristotle's works with the sole intention of feeding continual discussions and disputes over questions of no importance. For this reason, he asserted that the Aristotelians of his time rejected authors such as Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Pliny, and Plutarch since they no longer served their own ends ("they obviously thought them quite inexperienced, and unlikely to be of sufficient assistance in those scholastic altercations", *Exercitationes*, Vol. III, p. 107A). Nor did they display an equal interest in all of Aristotle, but preferred to base their opinions on just a few works in which "Aristotle has a wax nose (*nasum cereum*), since it can be twisted without trouble in whatever direction you wish" (*Exercitationes*, Vol. III, p. 107A). In the same way scholastics and Peripatetics took care not to encourage young people to study disciplines which would lead them towards a critical investigation of the truth, such as mathematics. He pointed out that if they were to attempt philosophy in the *historicus stylus* rather than in the *stylus confutatorius*, they would become aware of the great contributions made to philosophy by other ancient thinkers. Instead they preferred to worship Aristotle as if he were a divinity because they had never compared him with other philosophers, and had

¹² Reference here is to the edition: Pierre Gassendi, *Opera omnia*, 64 vols. (Lyons, 1658; facsimile edition with an introduction by Tullio Gregory, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1964). In particular, the *Exercitationes paradoxicae adversus Aristoteleos* are found in Vol. III, pp. 95-210; *Philosophiae Epicuri syntagma*, Vol. III, pp. 1-94; *Diogenis Laertii liber decimus* . . . , Vol. V, pp. 1-166; *Vita Epicuri* . . . , Vol. V, pp. 167-236; 'De philosophia universe' in *Syntagma philosophicum*, Vol. I, pp. 1-30; 'De logicae origine et varietate liber unus' in *Syntagma philosophicum*, Vol. I, pp. 35-66.

never even progressed further than Averroës' judgements on him. As a result, Scholastics knew Aristotle only through his commentator, who "so openly proclaimed that in fifteen hundred years no error had been detected in Aristotle's text" (*Exercitationes*, Vol. III, p. IIIA). Thus, Gassendi pointed out, medieval philosophers (and with them sixteenth-century Aristotelians) turned Aristotle into the supreme authority, even on matters of theology, a judgement based *ex auctoritate* and without any foundation. Their claim to *libertas philosophandi* was in fact confined to the acknowledgment of different positions (nominalist, Thomist, Scotist) within Aristotelianism itself. If they also examined the doctrines of other thinkers in depth, they would truly be free thinkers:

Whoever . . . prefers Aristotle to Plato needs to know (at least if he would judge soundly) what was of value and worth in Aristotle and Plato, that is to say in knowledge and learning. Or since there are disputes about Pythagoras, Thales, Democritus, Zeno, Pyrrhus, Epicurus, and the rest, at the same time he (the philosopher) needs to know whatever they knew, for otherwise how shall he judge (*discerneret*) in what respect Aristotle surpasses all the rest? (*Exercitationes*, Vol. III, p. IIA7A).

For Gassendi, the myth of an infallible Aristotle, and of a *secta aristotelica* superior to all others, was completely unfounded. He proposed to demonstrate this by drawing widely from historical sources about Aristotle's life and the reception of his works, while at the same time pointing out the many gaps, errors, and contradictions in Aristotelian doctrine. To accomplish his end, as has been noted, he planned to write his *Exercitationes* in seven books; only the first two were completed. Bk. I confronted the general problem of Aristotelianism in his time. Bk. II dealt specifically with Aristotelian logic. The other five would have been about physics, celestial bodies, mixed bodies, metaphysics, and ethics. Although not finished, this vast design is sufficiently outlined in the first two books. Gassendi stated explicitly that Aristotle's life did not present a model for Christians: he had betrayed his country, had poisoned Alexander the Great (in spite of having served him for a long time), was dedicated to the pleasures of the flesh, and probably ended his life by committing suicide. Gassendi also maintained even more strongly that many Aristotelian doctrines could not be reconciled with the Christian faith.

Much of Gassendi's historiographical activity was dedicated to retrieving and re-presenting the life and philosophical doctrines of Epicurus who first taught men the true purpose of philosophy, "to live well and happily", in the most complete *libertas philosophandi*. But he was fully aware that if he were to praise only the founder of the *secta epicurea* he would fall into the same error as the Aristotelians had done. Therefore, he did not hesitate to level

the same criticism at Lucretius, the great exponent of Epicurean philosophy, as he had previously levelled at Averroës, Aristotle's commentator; he overpraised the master and forgot that many other philosophers were also worthy of praise. To avoid exalting one philosopher above all others, Gassendi made an initial *excursus* into the origins of philosophy and the various Greek *sectae*, and then a second study of logic.

Philosophy, for Gassendi, had extremely ancient origins, linked with the very origin of man. He did not accept the distinction that many suggested between a poetic wisdom or mythical knowledge and a philosophy strictly speaking. Even if historically the term 'philosophy' was coined by Pythagoras, in reality, he said, "the thing itself, it is beyond doubt very ancient, and he [Cicero] is right to rebuke those who think the founders of human institutions were not really philosophers (*philosophi*), though they were wise men (*sapientes*). Therefore, since the origin of wisdom and philosophy (*sapientiae philosophiae-que origo*) is the same it must be sought before Pythagoras" (*De philosophia*, Vol. 1, p. 6A). Gassendi quoted abundant documentary evidence from the Bible to prove that "the initial origin of wisdom and philosophy must be sought not in the histories or fables of the peoples but in Holy Scripture" (*De philosophia*, Vol. 1, p. 7A).

However, Gassendi gave only a rapid summary of pre-Greek philosophy, obtaining his data primarily from Clement of Alexandria. His chief interest lay in the Greek *sectae* and *ratio philosophandi*. For Gassendi, as for Sextus Empiricus, there were three ways of philosophizing: the dogmatic way, by asserting truths; the acatalectic way, by denying that it was at all possible to comprehend reality; and the sceptical way, which maintained that although man could never arrive at the truth he would still continue to seek it. Each philosopher in the Greek *sectae* followed one of these methods. Gassendi, however, named only two Greek sects, the Ionian and the Italic. To the *secta ionica* belong not only the true and proper Ionians (Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes), but also Anaxagoras, Archelaus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and many other Athenian or at any rate Greek thinkers. The *secta italica* was created by Pythagoras in Magna Graecia and developed through the many illustrious thinkers from that region: Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus, Pyrrho of Elis, and Epicurus. Gassendi admitted that Epicurus should not really have been placed in the *secta italica*, because of both his origins and his teachers. Indeed, he had no teacher, but preferred to proceed "under his own guidance". However, he was included because he was inspired by the doctrines of Democritus, who belonged to the Italic sect. The historic treatment concluded with Epicurus, with Gassendi defending the integrity of his morals and the sublimity of his philosophic message against his many detractors.

An analogous *excursus* was propounded for the origins of logic and how it differed in the various *sectae*.¹³ Gassendi preferred to overlook the very first manifestations of this art found in the serpent's seductive words in the

¹³ This brief history of logic had a decisive influence on the birth of this historiographical genre in Germany at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Many of his theories can be found in the works of G. Walch and other authors. It should be noted, moreover, that in the second half of the eighteenth century Joachim Georg Darjes, in his treatise on logic entitled *Via ad veritatem* (Jena, 1764), pp. 195–304 (the work was published for the first time in 1755, and in 1776 it was translated into German with the title *Weg zur Wahrheit*), presents a brief history of logic that is in fact an epitome of Gassendi's work, although the author did not acknowledge this. Darjes' text came to be widely used by Kant in his lectures on logic, above all the historical part of it (cf. G. Micheli, *Kant storico della filosofia* (Padua, 1980), pp. 136–41).

Garden of Eden, and Cain's clever rationalizations of his crime as told in the Bible. However, he maintained that it was certain that after the Flood it was possible to find many important traces of logic, even if these traces did not consist, as they had with the Greeks, "in contorted sophisms and fallacious arguments . . . but in harkening to sound discourses (*sani sermones*), grave histories (*historiae graves*), well-wrought poems (*concinna carmina*), elegantly proposed riddles (*aenigmata*), allegories, etc., with which they were imbued from childhood" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, 35B).

According to Gassendi, logic in the Greek world probably began in this manner:

Logic appears to have originated in the following way: there were certain men accounted wise; when their contemplations and analyses (*rationes*) turned out especially well, they either announced their results aloud or committed them to writing. Then, either they themselves or others anxious to imitate them examined their pronouncements in detail, and observed how every single point had been thought, explained, and deduced. Deciding they should keep to the same procedure in everything else, so that when they would they might philosophize aptly and correctly, as they made progress, they both formulated and wrote down rules to remind themselves and instruct others, And thus the true origin and occasion of logic seem to have been (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, p. 36B).

Zeno of Elea is considered the first inventor of true and proper logical precepts. The *logica Zenonis seu eleatica* was divided into three different types, *ars consequutionum*, *ars collocutionum*, and *ars contentionum*. In practice these types were respectively a method of drawing valid consequences, a method of setting up a discussion according to dialectics, and lastly a method of constructing paradoxical arguments. Strangely, Gassendi did not mention the method of proof *ab absurdo* which was Zeno's most original contribution to the development of logic.

After having explained the *logica Zenonis*, Gassendi illustrated the *logica Euclidis seu megarica*, dwelling particularly on Eubulides who, as Diogenes Laertius recorded, was the inventor of numerous paradoxes. Gassendi spent a long time over Eubulides, recording one by one the noted paradoxical arguments which went under the name of 'the liar', 'the Electra', 'the veiled man', 'the horned man', etc., and investigating how they spread among Greek and Latin authors.

For Gassendi it was also possible to speak of a *logica Platonis* (even though no work with this specific title was extant). This logic might be extracted from his dialogues, and together with a rational logic or dialectic, he thought, Plato also seemed to have developed an intellectual logic: "Plato may be thought to have embraced under the name of dialectic the science both of the goal and of the path to the goal. That is, in the first mode he

treated dialectic as intellectual, and the same as theological knowledge; in the latter, as rational, and the same as other people's art of discourse" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 42A–B).

Plato's rational dialectic was divided into the methods of *divisio*, *diffinitio*, and *inductio* and the procedure *a contrariis*. Although this was the method of Platonic dialectic, Gassendi implied that forms of the Aristotelian syllogism might also be traced in it, since Plato too "will seem to argue and weave his syllogisms now by that form, now by another" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 42A).

Although Aristotle's works contained many useless elements and lacked several necessary for a complete logical discussion, such as the hypothetical syllogism, Gassendi gave him credit for developing logic further than any other philosopher. Gassendi levelled a more definite criticism at the alleged authenticity of Aristotle's works, and making use of all the data available from ancient sources asserted that very little was known with certainty about the works attributed to Aristotle, and even less of their internal chronology.

Gassendi also gave ample space to the logic of the Stoics who "apparently wished to snatch the prize (*palnam*) for this art (*artem*) from all others" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 49A). They passed down many doctrines on the hypothetical or conditional syllogism, purposely neglecting categorical syllogisms in order to present an alternative logic to Aristotle's. But Gassendi did not think that ignoring the categorical syllogism constituted a gap in their logic, but rather a different way of understanding logic: "they may perhaps be excused on this score, for just as there is no absolute syllogism (*nullus syllogismus absolutus*) that cannot be propounded hypothetically, so there is no hypothetical syllogism that cannot be uttered absolutely, and rules transmitted in relation to the one can be applied to the others" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 42B). Thus the Stoics rightly preceded the doctrine on the hypothetical syllogism by their own teaching on the meaning of terms and on the proposition, which is not to be found in Aristotle's logic.

This exposition of ancient logic concluded with Epicurus, who, Gassendi claimed, must not be considered the enemy of dialectic for having opposed Stoic logic, since he did so only because "there was very little worth while in it, and a very great deal of nonsense (*nugatum vero plurimum esset*)" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 52B). For this reason he "refused to retain even its name [i.e., 'logic'], but substituting in its stead a few canons by which the intellect searching for the truth might be aided, he called this part of philosophy, according to previous deductions, *canonic*" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 52B). So Gassendi continued with an exposition of Epicurus' fourteen canons or rules. We shall return to Gassendi's interest in Epicurus later when we examine his volumes explicitly dedicated to Epicurus' life and philosophical doctrines.

After ancient logic, Gassendi introduced four further types of logic: the

systems of Raymond Lull, Peter Ramus, Francis Bacon and Descartes. It was not merely by chance that Gassendi passed directly from the ancients to Raymond Lull. He justified this by saying: "We need not add anything on those who in quite a long sequence of generations once more acquired it [logic], since virtually every philosopher, having enrolled in one of the established sects, did not so much mean to found a new logic as to follow that received by his sect, or, if he wished to produce anything of his own, write commentaries on it" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, p. 56A).

This type of commentary had been originated by Greek and Latin annotators, continued by the Arabs and taken to its limits by the *scholastici doctores*. Often the latter did not merely confine themselves to commenting on the text but "in its stead substituted and developed a vast jumble (*farrago*) of useless subtleties, of which more intelligent persons are nowadays all but ashamed, as of so much rubbish" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, p. 56A).

By contrast, Raymond Lull, although a contemporary of the scholastics, worked out a *nova logica*, which was not found so much in the work actually entitled *Logica nova*, but rather in the *Ars magna* and *Ars parva*; while another of his works, *Cabbalistica*, was a scheme for proceeding correctly in the sciences. Indeed Lull's conception of logic still seemed relevant to Gassendi; he saw it as an "an art of . . . discoursing on or enquiring (*inquirendus*) into and giving responses on all things" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, p. 56A), and for this reason Gassendi maintained that he wanted to speak further about him.

But Raymond Lull could not be considered the true inventor of a new logic, "since no innovation had been made in the schools as a result of Lull's art, which seemed to be a logic more intricate (*intricator*) and more pointless (*vanior*), but people persisted in the same trifles already mentioned" (*De logicae origine*, Vol. I, p. 59A). There was, however, a radical change in logic when Lorenzo Valla, Juan Luis Vives, and above all Peter Ramus initiated their vast polemic against Aristotelian logic. This made it possible for many authors like Rudolph Agricola, Frans Titelmans, Philip Melanchthon, and Girolamo Cardano to elaborate a logic that really was new because it did not depend on Aristotle. Ramus in particular simplified logic by reducing it to *inventio* and *judicium*, and discussed it in its entirety in only two books. This precision in logical discourse was particularly appreciated by Gassendi, who had already polemicized against the Aristotelians' excessive verbosity in the *Exercitationes paradoxicae*, affirming ironically that the only serious disputation it was possible to make was "against that pompous art, whose acquisition as we see takes so many months, indeed for most people so many years" (*Exercitationes*, Vol. III, p. 149A). Gassendi also appreciated that Ramus' logic, closely connected with rhetoric and the art of speech, provided a useful instrument for the art of oratory.

A more radical renewal of logic, in fact a genuine *instauratio magna*, was

made by Francis Bacon, who took on the task of liberating logic from all prejudices, especially those that proceeded “from the sects and sayings of the philosophers and the perverse rules of proof (*ex perversis demonstrationum legibus*)” (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 63B). Bacon, having understood in the *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* “how inconsiderable is the knowledge of truth and the intrinsic nature of things men have attained from the time they began to philosophize; with truly heroic courage they dared to attempt a new path, and to hope that, provided people stuck to it with strength and diligence, at last a new and perfect philosophy could be founded and maintained” (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 62B).

For Gassendi, Bacon’s logic was important above all because it did not limit itself to the description or contemplation of nature, but also undertook “so far as possible in imitation of nature, to generate many things, that is, to attach new shapes or natures to given bodies” (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 64A). Naturally this active operation on nature was only possible when it had been completely understood through induction, which was “the very key (*ipsa clavis*) for imitating nature” (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 64A). Gassendi’s exposition of Bacon’s method brings to light the notable advances that can be made in the various disciplines whenever they are pursued with rigour.

Finally, René Descartes seems to have followed Bacon’s intention of re-newing philosophy from its foundations. Nevertheless, Gassendi did not think that

he followed the same path as Bacon, but whereas Bacon sought assistance from things to perfect the thoughts of the intellect, he banished all thoughts about things and judged that there was support enough in thought itself for the intellect, by its own power, to attain perfect knowledge of all things, even the most abstruse (*abstrusissima*), not only of bodies but even of God and the soul (*De logicae origine*, Vol. 1, p. 65B).

In this work, however, Gassendi limited himself to a brief explanation of the method of Cartesian doubt, using more or less the same words as Descartes, since, as he states, he dealt with these matters in another work. In the *Disquisitio methaphysica seu dubitationes et instantiae adversus Renati Cartesii metaphysicam* Gassendi opposes Descartes’ doctrine harshly, levelling the same accusation at the “father of modern philosophy” as he had levelled before at Aristotle and the Aristotelians — the accusation of dogmatism: “Just as if you were the only metaphysician or natural theologian and no one but you alone strove to raise himself above the senses and understand abstract things as far as nature allows, as if you alone loved truth and no one but you were either willing or able to achieve it” (*Disquisitio*, Vol. III, p. 277A).

Gassendi’s most significant historiographical undertaking, however, was

devoted to the regeneration of Epicurus' doctrines and the interpretation of his life. Gassendi prepared a new edition of the Greek text of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Philosophers* (with a Latin translation of the tenth book), which contained Epicurus' Life and several of his letters, adding full critical and philological notes. He himself also wrote a *Life of Epicurus*, drawing data from sources other than Diogenes Laertius, and explaining Epicurean philosophy in its entirety in the *Syntagma*. In these three works Gassendi committed himself to a most remarkable philological and historical undertaking. He offered his contemporaries the portrait of an extremely upright man who was also a philosopher of the greatest importance. This was especially evident in the third to eighth chapters of the Life, in which he demonstrated the groundlessness of the many calumnies cast at Epicurus. Gassendi supplied documentary evidence to show that these accusations had originated with the enmity of Zeno and the Stoics; once they understood that the real purpose of Epicurus' philosophy was to lead to the tranquillity of the soul and not to the pleasure of the senses, "they conceived an everlasting hatred of Epicurus" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 193A). Taking the word 'pleasure' which recurs frequently in his philosophy as a starting point, they accused him of devoting himself to the pleasures of the flesh and of being the advocate of a philosophy of pleasure. This Stoic attitude remained unchallenged for a long time, because "it was their principle to attack Epicurus, whether justly or unjustly, as fiercely, and rend him as cruelly as they could; this was the torch they passed on to each other, and a person would have been held a bastard and degenerate Stoic if he failed to condemn Epicurus, or accorded him the slightest praise, even if deserved" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 194A).

The Stoics then, who would always present themselves to the public with "austere countenance, shaven skin, solemn gait, neglected dress" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 196A), while Epicurus always appeared amiable and cordial, were easily able to spread the image of an Epicurus who was the "advocate and follower of filthy pleasures" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 196A).

These calumnies against Epicurus later grew fiercer and fiercer, and even such illustrious men as Cicero, Plutarch, Galen, and numerous Holy Fathers perpetrated them, although they "spoke of Epicurus not as they themselves knew he was, but as that common herd for whom they were concerned thought he was" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 197A). In fact they thought it praiseworthy "if, in order to inculcate a horror of filthy pleasures, they caustically drove deeper the mark with which Epicurus was branded" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 196A). For example, Gassendi asserted that Cicero, "although his friends of the Epicurean school often complained that he published so much that was not true, nevertheless, being a man who courted the people, preferred to speak in the manner of the people" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 197A). Others acted in the same way, to the point that no one

bothered to read Epicurus' works any longer, and almost everybody accepted the common judgement without question. Thus Gassendi took on the task not only of refuting these common calumnies, but also of demonstrating positively the saintliness of the Athenian philosopher's morals and the greatness of his teaching. He even did so where historical documentation was lacking:

Nor, if he was, as he may have been, impious, spiteful, or in some other way vicious, am I the man to cling to his defence by my teeth or to paint him in false colours and plead that he was pious, good, and temperate. Indeed, if it should ever turn out to be clear that the charges are not calumnies and that he really did do wrong and is not rebuked unjustly, I shall not be the last to bring a prosecution. Thus, without hurt or damage on my part to the truth, acting in good faith, I merely state the explanations and conjectures that, if they do not move others, at least make the case seem probable to myself. (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 201B).

Confirming decisively that "one may sometimes defame writers' lives, because it is easier to persuade people that way that their doctrines are discreditable" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 210A), Gassendi presents an Epicurus who is pious, chaste, virtuous, and far removed from any licentiousness, in order to restore him "into the chorus of philosophers" or indeed "among the greatest philosophers" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 223). Gassendi concludes by stating that many other contemporary authors are of the same opinion: Francesco Filelfo, Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, Guarino Veronese, Palingenio Stellato, Gabriel Naudé and many more: "there would never be an end if I wished to collect the very similar testimonials, above all of recent writers" (*Vita Epicuri*, Vol. v, p. 224B).

Given the vast amount of critical literature on this author, reference should be made to pp. xxiii–xxiv of the *Opera omnia* (see above, n. 12), where T. Gregory has collected together the most significant studies to have appeared during the last century.

Other studies are:

R. Lindsay, 'Pierre Gassendi and the Revival of Atomism in the Renaissance', *American Journal of Philosophy*, xlii (1945), pp. 235–42; H. Ben, *Du scepticisme de Gassendi* (Paris, 1960); L. Cafiero, 'Robert Fludd e la polemica con Gassendi', *RCSF*, xix (1964), pp. 367–410; xx (1965), pp. 3–15; R. Olivier Bloch, *La philosophie de Gassendi. Nominalisme, matérialisme, métaphysique* (The Hague, 1971); J. S. Spink, *Il libero pensiero in Francia da Gassendi a Voltaire*, intro. by N. Badaloni, trad. L. Roberti Sacerdote (Florence, 1974), pp. 3–196; G. Gori, 'La rinascita dello scetticismo e dell'epicureismo: Gassendi', in *Storia della filosofia*, ed. M. Dal Pra, Vol. vii (Milan, 1976), pp. 467–97, 885–9; G. Gori, 'Tradizione epicurea e convenzionalismo giuridico in Gassendi', *RCSF*, xxxiii (1978), pp. 137–53; A. Alberti, *Gassendi e l'atomismo europeo* (Florence, 1981); L. A. Joy, *Gassendi the Atomist: Advocate of History in an Age of Science* (Cambridge and New York, 1987); H. Jones, *The Epicurean Tradition* (Cambridge and New York, 1989); 'Bernier et les

Gassendistes', ed. Sylvia Murr, *Revue corpus*, no. xx/xxi (1992); M. J. Osler, 'Ancients, Moderns and the History of Philosophy: Gassendi's Epicurean Project', in *The Rise of Modern Philosophy: The Tension between the New and Traditional Philosophies from Machiavelli to Leibniz*, ed. T. Sorell (Oxford, 1993), pp. 129–43.

The census of Gassendi's Aristotelian commentaries is in C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), pp. 162–3. Diogenes Laertius' commentary on the life of Epicurus, translated and annotated by Walter Charleton (London, 1654), is available in a facsimile edition: W. Charleton, *Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charletoniana; or, A Fabrick of Science Natural*, with Indexes and a New Introduction by R. H. Kargon (New York, 1966). X. Bernier's translation of Gassendi has been reprinted with introduction by S. Murr, *L'abrégé de la philosophie de Gassendi ed. François Bernier, paru à Lyon chez Anisson, Posuel et Rogaud en 1684* (Paris, 1992).

4.9. Claude Guillermet Bérigard (c.1590–1663)*

Claude Guillermet Bérigard or Beauregard (Berigardus) was born at Moulins in France, probably in 1590 (Niceron, however, sets the date at 15 August 1578). He took a degree *in artibus* at the University of Aix-en-Provence and went on to Italy where he taught at the University of Pisa from 1627 to 1638. After that he taught philosophy at the University of Padua until 1663, the year of his death.

While it is uncertain whether or not he had any connection with Gassendi, whom he quotes, one should note his friendship at Pisa with Paganino Gaudenzio, an Italian precursor of naturalistic atomism with a strong interest in the history of philosophical thought, which must have had a notable influence on his ideas. His most important work is the *Circulus pisanus de veteri et peripatetica philosophia*, a dialogue between one Charilaus, a follower of Aristotelian philosophy, and one Aristaeus, who upholds Ionian philosophy. It is thus titled because it was written in memory of a "philosophical contest entered into at Pisa", that is, of a *disputatio circularis* held at the university of that city. The work was published for the first time in Udine in 1643 and reprinted with many modifications in Padua in 1661, which is the edition referred to here.

Although Claude Bérigard taught Aristotelian physics for many years, first at Pisa and then at Padua, he stated in this dialogue, which mirrors his teaching, that he did not wish to be one of those who "weigh up Aristotle's words and craft syllable by syllable and do not find anything that contradicts him" (p. *1). In fact he proposes to "publish those things that in some way contribute to bringing truth out of hiding, whether they agree with Aristotle or others" (p. *1), and will go in search of ancient pre-Socratic teachings and contrast them systematically to Aristotle's. He will not, however, take up the individual opinions of the ancient thinkers, because "they each have something that Aristotle easily refutes with his arguments, especially if we were to take their opinions as he reports them" (p. *2). "I preferred, out of

* by Francesco Bottin.

everything excellent the ancients may seem to have said, to choose opinions consistent with one another (*placita inter se cohaerentia*) from which to construct a doctrine that Aristotle could not so easily demolish with his machines and that might on the contrary dare to assail the Peripatetic stronghold" (p. *8).

On one hand Bérigard proposed to examine the validity of such philosophers from a contemporary point of view, and on the other he intended to check "whether Aristotle overthrew earlier philosophy" (p. *4). He mixed a historical interest with a precise theoretical one which concerned itself with the most important questions of natural philosophy. He intended to investigate "whether Aristotle or the earlier philosophers held the better view" (p. *6).

The first *circulus* (pp. 1-4) surveyed the development of ancient philosophy, from the spread of Aristotelian philosophy up to the Middle Ages, and was for the most part drawn from ancient sources. The influence of Gassendi's short history of philosophy in *Syntagma philosophicum* should not be discounted. In the following *circuli* he penetrated more explicitly into the opinions of the *veteres*.

Particularly important to our study is the third *circulus*, in which, before explaining the Ionians' views on the first principles of matter, Bérigard proposed first to get to know the opinions of the *veteres* "rather from what we may believe such serious men thought than from the words of Aristotle, who, setting sail for his own praise, attacks that [view]" (p. 8). This proposition must be taken to its proper conclusion even if the *veteres* have "wrapped their dogma in some obscure coverings" (p. 8); it is not correct to say that Aristotle was in a position to understand their obscurity better, since, "wishing to be thought the founder of a new doctrine, he preferred putting that on a firm basis to shedding light on the obscurity of the ancients" (p. 8). Moreover, he noted in general that Aristotle "was not concerned to investigate so much as to reject" (p. 8) the opinions of the *veteres*. On the other hand, he said that "since it is very difficult to follow the meaning (*mens*) of the ancient philosophers" because of the scarcity of their works, "from those few remnants of their opinions, we can undertake nothing except to inquire, not what they thought (*senserint*), but what they ought to have thought, consistently and in line with their own principles (*ad sua principia*)" (p. 8).

Bérigard reconstructed the thought of philosophers before Socrates using this exegetic methodology and focusing on natural philosophy. For example, he attempted to give an independent interpretation of Aristotle's criticism of Anaximander's opinion that the infinite is the first principle of the world, reporting various interpretative hypotheses that had been made throughout the centuries and then concluding that Anaximander meant "as it were a seedbed of infinite simple bodies" (p. 8). Bérigard's chief interest, in regard

to this and many other problems, was undoubtedly in Anaximander, whose doctrines on first principles and on the structure of the universe he considered to be most representative of pre-Socratic thought. He contrasted them with Aristotle's, even if they were not specifically Anaximander's or even Anaxagoras', "but rather fitted together out of both men's obscure sayings (*dictis obscuris*)" (p. 14).

The comparison between the pre-Socratics and Aristotle continued through the various *circuli* and covered practically every theme of natural philosophy from the origin of the world to the nature of the soul. It is well known that Bérigard extracted from this comparison a kind of qualitative atomism which conformed to the cultural expectations of his time. In the preface to Pt. IV, in fact, he explicitly mentions the most illustrious men of his time, from Galileo to Descartes, from Gassendi to Digby (cf. p. 357). It is also certain that his adhesion to atomic naturalism was a particularly cautious one. He speaks of *corpuscula*, using the explanations of Anaximander, Anaxagoras, and Empedocles, rather than following Democritus, who prefers the term *semina*.

One cannot omit to note that the recent condemnations of atomism and of Galileo at the Sorbonne in 1624 might have made him extremely cautious about how he recovered ancient doctrines. Several times in the course of the work he expressed a fear of running into some kind of theological error, and his inconsistencies can often be traced to this worry. Regarding theories in the writing of the *veteres* about the earth's movement, for example, he stated explicitly that "warned by such a great philosopher's [sc. Galileo's] example . . . one may attack the opinion that the earth moves, but not defend it" (p. 285), and he avoided discussing the problem.

On the life:

Nicéron, xxxi, pp. 123-7; DBI, vii, pp. 386-9; DSB, II, pp. 12-13.

On the thought:

P. Ragnisco, 'Da Giacomo Zabarella a Claudio Berigardo, ossia prima e dopo Galileo nell'Università di Padova', in *Atti del r. Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti*, Ser. VII, v (1893-4), I, pp. 477-518; A. Favaro, 'Oppositori di Galileo, IV: Claudio Berigardo', *ibid.*, LXXIX (1919-20), II, pp. 39-92; E. Garin, 'Da Campanella a Vico', in *id.*, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo* (Pisa, 1970), pp. 93-4; A. Cecchini Degan, *Nuovi studi su C. Berigardo* (Padua, 1971); M. Bellucci, 'La filosofia naturale di Claudio Berigardo' (with an appendix of an unedited letter), *RCSF*, xxxvi (1971), pp. 363-411; M. Soppelsa, *Genesi del metodo galileiano e tramonto dell'aristotelismo nella scuola di Padova* (Padua, 1974), pp. 92-112; G. Stabile, *Claude Bérigard (1592-1663): Contributo alla storia dell'atomismo seicentesco* (Rome, 1975); U. Baldini, 'Il corpuscolarismo italiano del Seicento: Problemi di metodo e prospettive di ricerca', in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento: Atti del Convegno di studio di Santa Margherita Ligure (14-16 ottobre 1976)* (Florence, 1977), pp. 1-76.

4.10. Johannes Gerhard Scheffer (1621–1679)*

Johannes Gerhard Scheffer (Schefferus) was born at Strasbourg on 2 February 1621, attending both school and university there. At university he studied archaeology and antiquarianism, and in 1648, already well known for his first writings, he moved to the court of Queen Christina of Sweden, where he held the chair first of eloquence and politics and later of natural law and the law of nations at the University of Uppsala. He then became a member of the council of the Royal College of Antiquities and later first librarian of the university as well. He died at Uppsala on 26 March 1679.

Scheffer was chiefly valued by contemporary scholars for his numerous editions of Greek texts (Aelian's *Variae Historiae*, Arrian's *Tactica*, and the *Ars militaris* attributed to the emperor Maurice) and of Latin texts (Julius Obsequens' *De prodigiis*, Hyginus' *Astronomica*, and Phaedrus' *Fabulae*), for his studies on antiquity (*De militia navali veterum* (Uppsala, 1654), *De antiquorum torquibus syntagma* (Stockholm, 1656), *De re vehiculari veterum* (Frankfurt, 1671)), and for several successful works on Scandinavia of a historical-geographical nature, amongst which should be mentioned the *Lapponia, seu gentis regionisque Lapponum descriptio accurata*, published at Frankfurt in 1673 and immediately translated into French, German, and English.

Scheffer was only marginally involved with philosophy and the history of philosophy. His sole work on the subject is *De natura et constitutione philosophiae Italicae, seu Pythagoricae*, 180 + [15] pp. (Uppsala, 1664), written and printed only because of the constant urging of the author's patroness, Queen Christina of Sweden (*De natura et constitutione*, 'Lectori benivolo', p. [9]). The work is merely an essay or *praeludium*, as the author calls it (*De natura et constitutione*, 'Lectori benivolo', p. [10]), to a future history of Pythagorean philosophy in three books, never completed by Scheffer. Bk. I was to have dealt *de vita et disciplina Pythagorae*, Bk. II *de Pythagorae philosophiae*, and Bk. III *de claris Pythagoricis* (Fabricius, Vol. 1, p. 765 n. 3). The existing work, preceded by the author's dedication and foreword, is furnished with an 'index auctorum', an 'index vocabulorum graecorum', and an 'index rerum et verborum latinus'. It is subdivided into 15 chapters of unequal length, each preceded by a brief summary.

In the first, introductory chapter, Scheffer reviewed those ancient authors who could be possible sources for knowledge of Pythagorean philosophy. He lamented both the almost total loss of ancient philosophical texts ("a very few fragments") and the insufficiency, obscurity, and lack of order in the biographies of Pythagoras attributed to Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, and Iamblichus. These were the reason, he thought, for the lack of any full contemporary study of Pythagorean philosophy (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 1–8). And yet, as Scheffer had already observed, the sect played a decisive role in the history of ancient thought, not only because the philosophy of Pythagoras and his followers was derived for the most part "from Holy Scripture, whether understood well or ill", but also because Plato and Aris-

* by Giuseppe Micheli.

totle, "the heads and as it were leaders of all pagan wisdom and learning", in their turn took all their own doctrines from Pythagoras (*De natura et constitutione*, 'Lectori benivolo', pp. [12-13]).

The systematic handling of the argument begins in the second chapter. Scheffer of course meant Pythagorean philosophy when he said Italic philosophy, "not because it was invented by an Italic, or on Italic soil, but because it was in Italy that its founder first set up open school, had pupils and followers of his teaching, and sent them from Italy to other lands" (*De natura et constitutione*, p. 8). The founder of the Italian sect was Pythagoras, not Pherecydes, who was only Pythagoras' teacher in the way that Plato was Aristotle's (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 11-13).

Using Clement of Alexandria's evidence, Scheffer thought it possible to prove that Pythagorean philosophy was totally dependent on Oriental wisdom. Pythagoras had taken his doctrines from the 'barbarians', firstly from the Egyptians and Chaldeans and indirectly, through them, from the Jews (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 14-17). To be precise, Pythagoras took arithmetic from the Phoenicians, philosophy, geometry, and the concept of a single God from the Egyptians, astronomy from the Chaldeans, the art of divination from the Magi, "religious observances, the interpretation of dreams, prophecies, and various rites" from the Jews, and the doctrine of metempsychosis from the Indians (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 18-32).

He passed next to the 'Italic' notion of philosophy. For Scheffer, it was not possible to speak of philosophy and wisdom in the Greek world before Pythagoras; the so-called 'Seven Wise Men', including Thales himself, were not really wise men or philosophers, but were merely shrewd legislators possessed of good sense (*De natura et constitutione*, p. 33). To Pythagoras belongs the merit of having first introduced philosophy into Greece and coining the term then appropriated to designate that specific form of knowledge: "thus originated the word 'philosophy'. It was invented by Pythagoras himself and denoted a certain way of life — keeping apart from public business, being devoted to the study of wisdom — first established in Greece by Pythagoras, who followed the example of other, eastern nations, and was called by that name for the first time" (*De natura et constitutione*, p. 47-8).

For Pythagoras and the Italics, as later for Plato and for the Stoics, the ultimate end of philosophy was really the 'deification' of man. The knowledge of truth was held to be the only adequate way to achieve that lofty and supreme goal: "there was one means, one way, to be like God, namely through the truth (*per veritate*)". Pythagoras would have learned from the Magi that the body of God was similar to light and his mind to truth. For this reason he would conclude that "by nothing else could men become more like God than through the truth" (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 47-8).

For Pythagoras the subject of philosophical investigation was "*ta onta*, or the things that are, all devoid of matter, eternal and unchanging (*aeterna atque immutabilia*)". The entire eighth chapter of the work is dedicated to this theme and it is also the chapter with the highest philosophical content. Scheffer identified the fundamental thesis of Pythagorean doctrine as the discovery of the radical opposition between the 'intelligible' and the 'sensible', between the object of pure intellect (*noeton*), which gives us science, and the object of the senses (*doxaston*), which gives us only opinion. Pythagoras taught, in fact, "that *ta onta*, or the things that are (*sive ea quae sunt*), are so called in different ways: some properly, others by equivocation; that the former are immaterial and eternal, the latter are the opposite; that the former exist by themselves, the latter do not except by participation of some kind in the former; that only of the former is there *episteme* [science]" (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 56-7). Scheffer is uncertain whence Pythagoras drew this high, metaphysical doctrine: "Pythagoras appears to have derived these doctrines from the Egyptians; provided the famous Hermes, commonly called Trismegistus, . . . was an Egyptian and not a student of Plato's or (which comes to much the same thing) Pythagoras' philosophy" (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 57-8). There is no doubt, however, of its importance. For Scheffer it constituted the fundamental nucleus of more than a millenium of uninterrupted metaphysical tradition, which was handed down from Pythagoras through Parmenides, Socrates, and Plato to the Platonists of the Christian era, among whom the author mentioned Albinus and above all Iamblichus, from whose *Life of Pythagoras* Scheffer derived the fundamental elements of his interpretation of Pythagoras' metaphysics.

The exposition goes on to deal with the means indicated by Pythagoras for arriving at the contemplation of the intelligible. For Pythagoreans this could only occur as a result of self-knowledge: "the Pythagoreans maintained that no one would be successful in either human or divine studies, let alone attain likeness to God, who had not first learnt above all to know himself. Therefore this 'knowing oneself' (*semet ipsum nosse*) they put forward as the gate and door to philosophy" (*De natura et constitutione*, p. 67). This precept, which Pythagoras "had from the Indian wise men", was, according to Scheffer, followed later by Socrates, Plato, the Stoics, and the Cynics (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 68-70). It had a double purpose: one positive, that of knowledge, and the second negative, cathartic; one inviting the knowledge of the soul, the divine side, and the other the knowledge of the body, the material side, with the aim of purging and liberating the self "from the filth of the body (*a sordibus corporis*)" (*De natura et constitutione*, p. 73).

Chapters 10 to 14 contain a long discussion on the division of Pythagorean philosophy into 'cathartic' and 'telic', and into 'esoteric' and 'exoteric'; on the organization of the Pythagorean school and the division of his followers into

different categories; on the significance of certain precepts of ancient Pythagorean philosophy, such as the rule of silence and the prohibition of eating certain foods; and on his teaching method (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 77-169).

Chapter 15, the last, deals with the vicissitudes which befell the sect, dwelling particularly on the reasons which led to the violent destruction of the school little more than two centuries after its foundation (*De natura et constitutione*, pp. 170-80).

The intent of the author becomes sufficiently clear, from this summary exposition of the work, its nature, and its principal theses. While it certainly is not very original, one should not forget that it is only the outline of a much vaster and more ambitious project, based for the most part on the lives of Pythagoras written by Porphyry and above all by Iamblichus. Scheffer leaves us in no doubt about the historiographical value of these lives. His work can, all the same, be appreciated for its thoroughness and orderly exposition, qualities that accounted more than anything else for its success.

Scheffer's purpose was fundamentally scholarly. There is however a difference between him and the other great modern historians of ancient sects, such as Lipsius and especially Gassendi (to whose studies on Epicurus Scheffer's was often likened by his contemporaries). Scheffer was not moved by a precise, speculative interest in the revival of those ancient philosophies. He limited himself to pointing out the existence of a gap in the historiographical research of his own period. While other ancient sects had found their modern historians, this had not happened to the Pythagorean sect despite the importance of its school both for its duration and for the influence it exerted over other sects in the history of ancient thought. He intended to gather all the data available on this ancient philosophical sect, subject it to the close scrutiny of philological criticism, weed out the contradictions from among the different sources, compare them with each other, integrate one piece of evidence with another, propose a more correct reading of ancient texts, and finally interpret the whole in an orderly, systematic fashion which was also didactically efficacious. It was not an accident that initially Scheffer planned a critical edition of the evidence and other fragments of this school as well as the history of Pythagorean philosophy in the three books mentioned.

Scheffer's small work had a great success and was reprinted at Wittenberg in 1701 together with the Pythagorean *Carmina aurea* (*De natura et constitutione philosophiae Italicae seu Pythagoricae*. Editio secunda . . . Cui accedunt *Pythagorae aurea Carmina* (Wittenberg, 1701)). Every scholar of the time without exception lamented the fact that Scheffer had not been able to complete his initial project and had limited himself to the published outline, the *prodromus*. In 1692, in his *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Scheffer's friend and correspondent Morhof expresses his great appreciation of the enterprise

undertaken by Scheffer, in spite of the fact that it presented far greater difficulties than those encountered by Gassendi over Epicurus:

It was the most famous Johannes Scheffer . . . who . . . attempted to comprise the Pythagorean philosophy in an entire system, after the example of Gassendi, who put together into a single body the Epicurean teaching out of the surviving evidence for that philosophy. But Gassendi had more material for building his system than Scheffer, who had to gather it in mere scraps and fragments either from the writings of Plato and Aristotle, or from Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras* and similar writers.

He nevertheless concludes: "but it is a pity that the entire work did not see the light while he lived . . . Now we have only the precursor of a vast work" (Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 2, § 1). Dorn's judgement on Scheffer was very similar: on Pythagoras and the Pythagorean sect "no one could have treated the entire subject with more success, had he been allowed to survive his labours"; from him, however, we have only a "brief but learned text" (Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, pp. 196-7).

Until Brucker (who, while regretting that the work consisted only of a *prodromus* (Brucker, I, pp. 990-91), made extensive use of it in his *Historia critica*), Scheffer's work continued to be used as a source for the history of ancient Pythagoreanism, and is even cited several times by Vico in the *Scienza nuova* (§§ 52, 427). After Brucker, Scheffer's work was not used again, but continued to be cited in bibliographies until the end of the eighteenth century as the first modern work on ancient Pythagoreanism.

On the life:

Niceron, Vol. xxxix, pp. 220-34 (with a complete list of the writings); Jöcher, Vol. iv, coll. 231-3; BUAM, Vol. xxxviii, pp. 363-4; ADB, Vol. xxx, pp. 680-81.

On the success of the *De natura et constitutione philosophiae Italicae*:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 2, § 1; BCh, Vol. x, p. 159; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, pp. 196-7; Fabricius, Vol. I, Bk. II, ch. 12, p. 765 n. y; Struve, Vol. I, p. 93; Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 990-91; G. B. Vico, *La scienza nuova*, ed. F. Nicolini (Bari, 1953), Vol. I, § 52, p. 43; § 427, p. 175; Buhle, Vol. I, p. 231; Tennemann, Vol. I, p. 422.

5. EDITIONS OF DIOGENES LAERTIUS IN THE FIFTEENTH TO SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

5.1. *Incunabula*

There is no doubt that Diogenes Laertius' historical survey must be reckoned among the works that circulated most widely throughout the centuries.

Laertius' *Lives of the Philosophers* attracted the pioneers of printing from the earliest days. According to a census of incunabula, the first printed copy was the Latin translation made at the particular invitation of Cosimo de' Medici by the Camaldolite monk Ambrogio Traversari, who finished it in 1433, after nearly ten years' work (cf. Dini-Traversari, *Ambrogio Traversari*, p. 130). The edition by Elio Francesco Marchese was printed in Rome in 1472 by Giorgio Lauer. Traversari's Latin version was reprinted continually until the end of the century: in Venice in 1475, 1490, 1493, and 1497, in Brescia in 1485, and again in Bologna in 1495 (cf. Flodr, *Incunabula classicorum*, pp. 137-8).

A partial Italian translation soon appeared (actually an *extracto da D. Laetertio et da altri antiquissimi auctori*, as the title states), printed first in Venice in 1480 by Bernadino Celerio, and afterwards in Naples in 1485/1490, in Florence in 1488 and 1489, in Venice again in 1489 and 1499, in Bologna in 1494, and in Milan in 1495 and 1497 (cf. Flodr, *Incunabula classicorum*, pp. 137-8; *Indice generale degli incunaboli delle Biblioteche d'Italia*, II, pp. 154-6). The list of incunabula registers at the end an edition entitled *Auctoritates de vita et moribus philosophorum*, ed. Werner Rolewinck (Seville, 1480) (cf. Flodr, *Incunabula classicorum*, p. 138).

5.2. Sixteenth-Century Editions

Interest in the *Lives of the Philosophers* increased during the course of the sixteenth century. All the new intellectuals (the celebrated bookseller-printer-publishers) longed to reprint it or even bring out their own edition of Diogenes Laertius, and indeed this was done by Estienne in Paris, Gryphius in Lyons, Froben in Basle, and Luigi Zanetto in Rome, to mention just a few of the more notable printers. It is not easy to establish an exact list of original Greek, Latin, or vernacular editions of the sixteenth century. The *editio princeps* of the Greek appeared in 1533, from the famous press of Jerome Froben: Διογένους Λαερτίου περί βίων, δογμάτων καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων βιβλία δέκα. *Diogenis Laertii De vitis, decretis, et responsis celebrium philosophorum libri decem, nunc primum excusi* (Basle, 1533). It contained no notes. Froben himself and Nicolaus Episcopus wrote the brief preface addressed to scholars: "We now offer . . . Diogenes Laertius on the lives, sayings, and opinions (*dogmatibus*) of illustrious philosophers, a work long since worn by all men's hands, translated by the monk Ambrose, a man of no common learning, to whose efforts all lovers of wisdom owe much" (fol. 2r). They highlight the necessity of the Greek text, because "anyone willing to compare Diogenes' Greek with Ambrose's Latin will easily see how great a difference there is between pure springs (*fontes*) and puddles (*lacunae*), even if not entirely muddy" (fol. 2v). The two publishers included the few biographical details that were known about Diogenes

Laertius, as well as the traditional judgement on his work: that it was not without defects and gaps, and that there was a lack of detail in his material which often gave the impression that data were merely accumulated and the events were without unitary organization ("he appears to have used more care in collecting than judgement in choosing or arranging", fol. 2^v). On the question of the obscene or at any rate scabrous content, the publishers invite the reader to imitate doctors "who gather healing herbs from the same gardens and meadows where hemlock and wolfsbane grow. But one should know the poisons too, lest they deceive" (fol. 3^r).

During the course of the sixteenth century other editions followed. They reproduced the Greek text combined with Traversari's by now old Latin version or with Aldobrandini's new one. The first of these bilingual editions was printed in Geneva in 1570 by the scholar Henri Estienne (Stephanus). The Greek text offered several readings that were not included in the 1533 *editio princeps*; the Latin text was still Traversari's. The title page reads as follows: Διογένους Λαερτίου περί βίων, δογμάτων καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκμησάντων βιβλία ι. *Diogenis Laertii De vitis, dogmatis et apophthegmatis eorum qui in philosophia claruerunt, libri X. Ex multis vetustis codicibus plurimos locos integritati suae restituentes, et eos quibus aliqua deerant, explentes. Cum annotationibus Henr. Stephani. Pythagorae Philosophicorum fragmenta. Cum Latina interpretatione* (Geneva, 1570). In the second edition of 1593 he substituted the notes of the celebrated Genevan philologist Isaac Casaubon for his own: "But you will be astonished, and not without cause, when you see Diogenes emerging from my own workshop, and yet without those notes of mine he had with him in the previous edition" (p. 8). Estienne explained the change by alleging that his notes had been incomplete, and so he preferred Casaubon's; they were "far more welcome, being both far fuller (*auctiores*) and more correct (*emendatiores*)" (p. 9). Indeed, Casaubon, who married Henri Estienne's daughter Florence in 1586, had given proof of his great philological ability only a year after being appointed professor of Greek at the Geneva Academy in 1582, with the publication of the *Notae in Diogenem Laertium*, which first appeared under the pseudonym 'Hortibonus'.

A second bilingual edition came out in 1594, edited by Tommaso Aldobrandini and published by Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini: Λαερτίου Διογένους περί βίων, δογμάτων καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκμησάντων βιβλία ι. *Laertii Diogenis De vitis dogmatis et apophthegmatis eorum qui in philosophia claruerunt libri X. Thoma Aldobrandino interprete. Cum adnotationibus eiusdem* (Rome, 1594). Here Tommaso Aldobrandini's Latin translation is used instead of Traversari's fifteenth-century one. In the dedication to the "most serene Philip, prince of Spain", the translator's nephew, Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini, observed that a new edition of Diogenes Laertius' work was needed because earlier ones had been "previously troubled with countless errors" (fol. [1]^r), and a new Latin translation necessary because the existing

one was not good enough and the text "not translated with sufficient felicity" (ibid.). Improvements had been made by his paternal uncle, who "some time ago, having collated ancient manuscripts, carefully emended the text, translated it more correctly (*purius*) and more faithfully into Latin, and illustrated it with numerous notes" (ibid.). Tommaso Aldobrandini had died prematurely before seeing his work published, so his nephew, Cardinal Pietro, took on the task.

As well as these great Greek-Latin editions by Aldobrandini and by Estienne collaborating with Casaubon, there were many other editions of the *Lives of the Philosophers* in Traversari's Latin translation only. Around 1510 Benedetto Brognolo prepared an edition printed in Paris by Jean Petit. Two new editions (perhaps reprints?), also edited by Brognolo, appeared around 1515, again in Paris, one printed by Jean Petit and the other by Enguilbert, Jean, and Geoffroy de Marnef. Traversari's Latin version was published again in Basle in 1524 by the learned printer Curio, with his own emendations. In the preface 'Studioso lectori', Diogenes Laertius is described as a "a very sharp (*acerrimus*) philosopher, and most approved writer on the history of philosophy". In 1535 a new edition appeared in Cologne from the press of Eucharius Hirtzhorn (Cervicornus): *Diogenis Laertii clarissimi historici De vita, et moribus philosophorum libri decem, novissime iam post omnes omnium castigationes nova diligentia emendati, ad exemplaria Graeca diligenter collati, multisque versibus, quos superiores editiones non habent, donati. Id quod studiosus lector primo statim aspectu facile deprehendet. Cum indice in omnes libros locupletissimo* (Cologne, 1535). The work is preceded by the usual advertisement to the reader: the letter that Traversari sent to Cosimo de' Medici to accompany his version and a list of the names of the philosophers mentioned by Laertius. There are no notes. Cervicornus reprinted the work in 1542.

The popularization of Traversari's Latin version was given great impetus by the famous Lyons typographer, Sebastian Gryphius (Gryphes, Greffen, Grifio, Greyff) and his heirs. Seven editions or reprints were issued by this press in the sixteenth century, the first in 1541, the second in 1546 and the others in 1551, 1559, 1561, 1566, and 1592. Other sixteenth-century editions of Traversari's Latin only were published by Vincentius in Lyons in 1561 and by the Plantin press in Louvain in 1596.

Two other Latin editions appeared during the second half of the sixteenth century: one translated by Johannes Sambucus and published by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp in 1566, the other published in Paris in 1560 by Jérôme de Marnef and edited by a group of scholars ("by the care of most learned men", from the title page). Lastly, there was a Latin edition published in Geneva in 1595 by Jacques Choüet.

There were also a great number of not always faithful Italian translations in the sixteenth century, which continued to popularize the work. Particular mention should be made of the Italian translation by the brothers Bartolomeo, Ludovico, and Pietro Rosettini: *Le vite de gli illustri filosofi di Diogene Laertio, dal greco idiomate ridutte ne la lingua commune d'Italia* (Venice, 1545). "[A]s faithful translators and interpreters we have sought neither to epitomize nor paraphrase . . . we have always served with the fidelity fitting to true and faithful interpreters" (fol. [3]). These criteria were adopted and mentioned in the dedication to the readers. The version of the Rosettini brothers went into numerous other editions and reprints during the course of the century, and particularly distinguished itself among the numerous abridged, summarized, extracted, selected, and adapted versions of Laertius' work.

5.3. Seventeenth-Century Editions

There was an equally great interest in Diogenes Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum* in the seventeenth century, when the first French editions appeared: *Le Diogène françois tiré du grec, ou Diogène Laërtien touchant les vies, doctrines et notables propos des plus illustres philosophes compris en dix livres, traduit et paraphrasé sur le grec*, trans. François de Fougerolles (Lyons, 1601); *Diogène Laërce: De la Vie des philosophes*, trans. M. B***** [Gilles Boileau] (Paris, 1668). There was also a Flemish edition, *Kort Begrijp van Diogens Laërtius, zijnde het leven, heerlijke spreken, loffelijke daden, en snedige antwoorden der oude filosofhen, waar by komen eenige treffelijke spreken en gelykenissen uyt verscheyden heydensche en andere schryvers*, trans. P. D. F. (Rotterdam, 1655), and two English ones: *The Lives, Opinions, and Remarkable Sayings of the most famous Ancient Philosophers. . . Made English by several hands. The first volume*. [The first book translated by T. Fetherstone. The second book by Sam. White. The third book by E. Smith. The fourth book by J. Philips. The fifth book by R. Kippax. The sixth book by William Baxter. The seventh book by R. M.] (London, 1688); *The Lives, Opinions, and Remarkable Sayings of the most famous Ancient Philosophers. . . To which are added, the lives of several other philosophers, written by Eunapius of Sardis. . .*, (London, 1696).

Alongside the popularization and translation into the vernacular of Diogenes Laertius' work, two important new Greco-Latin editions of the *De vitis philosophorum* were published in the seventeenth century, which were valuable both from the philological and scholarly points of view. The first appeared in 1664 and was distinguished by Giles Ménage's notes (for Ménage's works on Laertius, cf. SSGF, 11, pp. 81–2): the Latin version reproduced here is Tommaso Aldobrandini's; the notes are by Aldobrandini himself, Henri Stephanus, Isaac Casaubon, and his son Meric. Ménage added a full commentary with amendments to the text: *Λαερτίου Διογένους περί βίων, δογμάτων καὶ ἀποφθεγμάτων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων βιβλία ι.* *Laertii Diogenis De vitis dogmatis et apophthegmatis eorum qui in philosophia claruerunt libri X, Thoma Aldobrandino interprete, cum annotationibus ejusdem, quibus accesserunt annotationes H. Stephani, et utriusque Casaboni; cum uberrimis Aegidii Menagii observationibus*, ed. John Pearson (London, 1664). The second bilingual edition was published by Heinrich Wettstein in 1692. He used Traversari's Latin version with amendments by Marcus Meibom (Meibomius), one of the many learned men at the court of Christina of Sweden, and quoted from the notes by Isaac and Meric Casaubon, Tommaso Aldobrandini, and Giles Ménage: *Diogenis Laertii De vitis, dogmatibus et apophthegmatibus clarorum philosophorum libri X. Graece et Latine. Cum subjunctis integris annotationibus Is. Casaboni, Th. Aldobrandini*

et Mer. Casauboni. Latinam Ambrosii versionem complevit et emendavit Marcus Meibomius. Seorsum excusas Aeg. Menagii in Diogenem observationes auctiores habet volumen II. Ut et ejusdem Syntagma de mulieribus philosophis; Et Joachimi Kühnii ad Diogenem notas, additae denique sunt priorum editionum praefationes, et indices locupletissimi (Amsterdam, 1692).

It should also be remembered that Estienne and Casaubon's sixteenth-century bilingual version was reprinted in Geneva in 1615 and 1616 by Samuel Crispin and again in 1616 by Jakob Stoër.

The census of the incunabula of Laertius' *De vitis philosophorum*:

M. Flodr, *Incunabula classicorum: Wiegendrucke der griechischen und römischen Literatur* (Amsterdam, 1973), pp. 137-8; almost all of the incunabula of Laertius' text can be found in Italian libraries, so it is useful to consult also the *Indice generale degli incunaboli delle Biblioteche d'Italia* (IGI), II, pp. 154-6.

On the editions:

Sandys, II, pp. 103-5 (table of the *editiones principes* of the classics); M. Trevissoi, *Bibliografia laertziana: Saggio* (Macerata, 1909); of particular usefulness are the printed catalogues of the Bibliothèque Nationale (Vol. XL, coll. 871-9) and of the British Museum (Vol. LIII, coll. 23-4); G. Donizelli, 'De Diogenis Laertii editione quae princeps vocatur eiusque cum codice Lobkowiciano (Z) cognitione', *Maia*, x (1958), pp. 317-23; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 118 n. 1; Del Torre, p. 10.

On Laertius and the significance of his work:

M. Trevissoi, *Diogene Laerzio: Saggio biografico* (Feltre, 1909); M. Dal Pra, *La storiografia filosofica antica* (Milan, 1950), pp. 247-60; Braun, pp. 33-6; M. Gigante, 'Per una interpretazione di Diogene Laerzio', in *Diogenes Laertius, Vite dei filosofi*, ed. M. Gigante (Universale Laterza, 331; Rome and Bari, 1976), pp. ix-lx.

On the reception of Laertius in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, I, ch. 1, § 1, pp. 2-3; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 1, § 3, p. 6; Heumann, Vol. 1, pp. 321-67; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 12, § 5, pp. 65-6; ch. 30, § 19, p. 174 (on the *Observationes in Laertii vitas philosophorum* of Joachim Kühnius); ch. 31, § 6, p. 178 (on the *Animadversiones in Diogen. Laertii lib. IX* of Gassendi); ch. 31, § 16, p. 183 (on the edition of Laertius with notes by Ménage and corrections by Meibom); Stolle, p. 436; in general the polyhistor of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries insert the *De vitis philosophorum* in their bibliographical indexes (Martin Lipenius, for example, dedicates an item to him in his *Bibliotheca realis philosophica*, I, p. 779).

On the Camaldolite Ambrogio Traversari and the first Latin translation of Laertius:

A. Dini-Traversari, *Ambrogio Traversari e i suoi tempi* (Florence, 1912) (for the translation of Laertius see especially pp. 127-30; but the information giving the first printed edition of Traversari as 'Venice, 1475' should be rectified); E. Garin, 'La prima traduzione latina di Diogene Laerzio', *GCFI*, xxxiii (1959), pp. 283-5 (which corrects several statements by A. Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (New York, 1958)); Garin, I, pp. 305-6; A. Sottili, 'Autografi e traduzioni di Ambrogio Traversari', *Rinascimento*, v (1965), pp. 3-15; id., 'Il Laerzio latino e greco e altri autografi di Ambrogio Traversari', in *Vestigia: Studi in onore di Giuseppe Billanovich* (Rome, 1984), I, pp. 699-746; M.

Gigante, 'Ambrogio Traversari interprete di Diogene Laerzio', in *Ambrogio Traversari nel VI centenario della nascita*, ed. G. C. Garfagnini (Florence, 1988), pp. 367-459.

On the printers and editors responsible for the diffusion of Laertius' work in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries:

(a) on Sebastian Gryphius:

BUAM, Vol. xvii, pp. 651-2; R. Mandrou, *Dagli umanisti agli scienziati. Secoli XVI and XVII*, trans. M. Garin (Rome and Bari, 1975), p. 20.

(b) on Henri Estienne:

BUAM, Vol. xiii, pp. 112-15; Wilamowitz, pp. 48, 50, 52-4; Mandrou, *Dagli umanisti agli scienziati*, pp. 20, 104-105.

(c) on Isaac Casaubon:

BUAM, Vol. vii, pp. 104-6; M. Pattison, *Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614)* (Oxford, 1892; 1st edn, London, 1875); L.-J. Nazelle, *Isaac Casaubon: Sa vie et son temps (1559-1614)* (Paris, 1897); Sandys, II, pp. 204-10; Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, p. 59; Braun, p. 56; G. Cozzi, 'Paolo Sarpi tra il cattolico Philippe Canaye de Fresnes e il calvinista Isaac Casaubon', in G. Cozzi, *Paolo Sarpi tra Venezia e l'Europa* (Turin, 1979), pp. 3-133, in particular p. 4 n. 4, a bibliography of Casaubon (the author reveals Casaubon's inner life, spread between the poles of Catholicism and Calvinism, in which he had been educated since birth); the census of Aristotelian commentators compiled by Casaubon is in C. H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotle Commentaries II: Renaissance Authors* (Florence, 1988), p. 81.

(d) on Meric Casaubon:

BUAM, Vol. vii, pp. 106-7.

(e) on Marcus Meibom:

BUAM, Vol. xxvii, pp. 520-21; Wilamowitz, p. 71.

(f) on [Johann] Heinrich Wetstein (Wettstein):

BUAM, Vol. xliv, p. 519.

PART I

THE FIRST GENERAL
HISTORIES OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ENGLAND AND
THE LOW COUNTRIES

LUCIANO MALUSA

CHAPTER I

THOMAS STANLEY'S *HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY*

INTRODUCTION

The simultaneous publication in 1655 of Thomas Stanley's *History of Philosophy* and Georg Hornius' *Historia philosophica* gave evidence for the growing need in England and the Low Countries for systematic historical analysis of philosophy. This increasing awareness that philosophy needed its own history was confirmed four years later by the appearance in Frankfurt of Johannes Joensen's *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae*, whose title gave the final blessing to the term 'history of philosophy'. The new genre was primarily concerned with those philological, literary, and scientific areas of scholarship that particularly interested the mid sixteenth century. The appearance of philosophical historiography was especially noteworthy in England, where the influence of Francis Bacon's character and work was pervasive. Stanley's *History of Philosophy* can only be understood in the light of the philological incentive arising from Bacon's encyclopaedic ideal. Although there is no clear relationship between Bacon's works and Stanley's background or his classical inclinations, so closely linked with mid-seventeenth-century English poetic circles, there can be little doubt that he was influenced by Bacon's advocacy of a history of 'philosophers' opinions'. We will examine first the *History of Philosophy*, because a grasp of the way in which Bacon's concept of the history of philosophy established itself in England is necessary for an understanding of the contemporary development of philosophical historiography in the Low Countries, including Hornius' *Historia philosophica*. Although in the mid sixteenth century Dutch philology and historical research were at a much higher level than in England, the new genre only really developed once scholars had understood the purpose of history of philosophy as proposed by Bacon.

English culture up to 1660 embraced Bacon's concept of *historia litteraria*,

which perceived the history of philosophy as part of the encyclopaedic knowledge he outlined in *The Advancement of Learning* (and later in the Latin version, *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum*). The programmatic and prophetic elements of Bacon's work affected many aspects of both historical and philosophical scholarship. As Hill has clearly demonstrated, Bacon's plan for knowledge to govern and dominate nature influenced thinkers with different points of view (George Hakewill, John Wilkins, Robert Boyle) as well as scientists and philosophers of the Royal Society (Abraham Cowley, Robert Hooke, Thomas Sprat). The cleric Robert Sanderson (1587–1662) was a rather independent but still important figure in English culture between the reigns of James I and Charles II. He attempted to rehabilitate Aristotelian logic, including some of the fundamental aspects of Ramist logic, while arguing for a systematic and direct interpretation of the Aristotelian texts and simplification of their arguments, the better to understand their substance (*res*). He too felt the need for historical comparison, and in the second edition of *Logicae artis compendium* (1618) he offers an account of the history of logic very much in line with Bacon's approach to that of philosophy.

Some writers and historians were also interested in Bacon's suggestions that historiography should no longer be thought of in rhetorical terms, but as the discovery and accumulation of the material required for understanding man's world and for directing his activity towards a precise objective. The most notable of these were the philosopher Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury (historian of Henry VIII's reign), the historian John Selden (whose wide-ranging studies embraced Egyptian thought and the history of natural law), and the explorer, writer, and historian Sir Walter Raleigh, whose *History of the World* was written in prison between 1605 and 1614 and published in London in 1614. In this work Bacon's views were rapidly assimilated by Raleigh and placed within the context of an overall vision and interpretation of history based to a great extent on Hermetic and secularized Neoplatonic ideas.

Bacon saw history as an accumulation of material founded on memory, the systematic investigation of the natural world ("natural history") and the human world ("civic history") aimed at the creation of a hierarchy of knowledge in space and time, and an increasingly complex use of information. History would no longer be the simple narration of events, but above all the rigorous verification of facts and their classification according to precise criteria defined by the nature of the research (*The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Arthur Johnston (Oxford, 1974), pp. 67–80, published together with *New Atlantis*). According to Bacon, the history of philosophy within this context was something very different from the straightforward description of sects, the listing of doctrines and major statements, or indeed the biographical study of ancient philosophers, even though these were all essential ingredients. It had to be the comprehensive study of scientifically proven philosophical events, which were then classified.

Bacon never actually used the term 'history of philosophy', preferring 'literary history and arts'. The inclusion of the history of philosophy in literary history was to free philologists and philosophers from unscientific and time-consuming reviews of opinions, only of value to idle curiosity. Bacon explained that a literary history was among the *desiderata*:

And yet I am not ignorant that in divers sciences, of the juriconsults, the mathematicians, the rhetoricians, the philosophers, there are set down some small memorials of the schools, authors, and books; and so likewise some barren relations touching the invention of arts and usages. But a just story of learning, containing the antiquities and originals of knowledges and their sects, their inventions, their traditions, their diverse administrations and managings, their flourishing, their oppositions, decays, depressions, oblivions, removes, with the causes, and occasions of them, and all other events concerning learning throughout the ages of the world, I may truly affirm to be wanting (*The Advancement of Learning*, p. 68).

Thus, the traditional review of opinions was to be replaced by analysis of the progress of knowledge and events that affected the philosophers' views on mankind and nature, so that they could take their place next to literary, poetic and scientific works.

Bacon, who had no intention of isolating the doctrines of philosophy from other expressions of human intelligence, stated that:

Above all things (for this is the ornament and life of Civil History), I wish events to be coupled with their causes. I mean that an account should be given of the characters of the several regions and peoples, their natural disposition, whether apt and suited for the study of learning, or unfitted and indifferent to it, the accidents of the times, whether adverse or propitious to science, the emulations and infusions of different regions, the enmity and partiality of the laws, the eminent virtues and services of individual persons in the promotion of learning and the like (trans. of *De dignitate* from *The Works of Francis Bacon*, collected and ed. by J. Spedding, R. L. Ellis, and D. N. Heath, Vol. iv, *Translation of Philosophical Works* (London, 1858), p. 301).

Literary history was supposed to create a grand scheme that linked the development of all disciplines and the relationship between them. It was not Bacon's intention to create a framework of dialectical or structural relationships between science, letters, and arts; but he did argue that they should be linked by a series of concrete historical relationships based upon causes.

The study of philosophical texts was not, therefore, an end in itself, but served to create the necessary reference points in the development of knowledge. Having asserted the systematic nature of literary history, Bacon invited historians to study the authors' texts, "that so, I do not say by a complete

perusal, for that would be an endless labour, but by tasting them here and there, and observing their argument, style and method, the literary spirit of each age may be charmed as it were from the dead" (trans. of *De dignitate* from Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. iv, p. 301). Because the purpose of historical research was the overall development of a topic, it was not possible to analyse each text in depth. Yet this did not mean that complete references to philosophical texts should be abandoned; the purpose of philosophical historiography was to review the works of philosophers, while placing them in the context of their times and within the development of human knowledge. Bacon took into account the attitudes of Renaissance philosophical historiography, which had moved the emphasis away from philosophers' opinions to the texts in which they were found, but he restricted the role of philology and analytical exegesis, and proposed greater concentration on demonstrating the order and the way in which doctrines developed.

It is significant that Stanley quoted Bacon's famous passage on the importance of philosophical historiography from Bk. III, ch. 4 of *De dignitate*, in his *History of Philosophy* (at the beginning of Vol. III in the first edition of 1660). Here, Bacon simply proposed that the historian should distance himself from philology in order to obtain a relatively comprehensive exposition of the chronological development of thought. Starting with problems concerning natural philosophy, which divided into a type of physics and metaphysics, he demonstrated how historical investigation could concern physics (as an appendix to it) by illustrating philosophers' opinions on a comprehensive view of nature. Natural philosophy needed to be placed in the context of the general advancement of knowledge. It was not simply a matter of drawing up an exhaustive list of doubts on the question of nature, as had been done in the past, or presenting a purely theoretical synthesis, as Aristotle had done. Bacon identified the first book of the *Metaphysics* as the beginning of a tradition, lasting up to scholasticism, that perceived the history of philosophy as a kind of imperialism. Aristotle, imitating his illustrious disciple Alexander, had wished "to conquer all opinions and to establish for himself a kind of despotism in thought" (trans. of *De dignitate* from Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. iv, p. 345). The only way to avoid a history of philosophy that eliminated philosophical doctrines and appropriated them for the hegemonic philosophy (Aristotle was again taken as the example, and his procedure likened to that of the Ottoman ruler who achieved the throne by murdering all his brothers; cf. *The Advancement of Learning*, p. 100, and *De dignitate*, Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. iv, p. 358) was to place systems and doctrines in the context of their own times, and link them in a way that did not take any single philosophical sect as its reference point.

Bacon drew up a brief outline for this kind of history of philosophy, and linked it to the knowledge of nature — the question which he had been discussing:

In the meantime it will be good to peruse the several differing systems of philosophy, like different glosses upon nature; whereof it may be that one is better in one place and another in another. Therefore I wish a work to be compiled with diligence and judgment out of the lives of the ancient philosophers, the collection of *placita* made by Plutarch, the citations of Plato, the confutations of Aristotle, and the scattered notices which we have in other books, both ecclesiastical and heathen (Lactantius, Philo, Philostratus, and the rest), concerning the ancient philosophers (trans. of *De dignitate*, Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. iv, p. 359).

Bacon reaffirmed that this work was not just to be a collection of opinions and biographies:

But here I must give warning that it be done distinctly and severedly; the philosophies of every one throughout by themselves, and not by titles packed and faggoted up together, as hath been done by Plutarch. For it is the harmony of a philosophy in itself which giveth it light and credence; whereas if it be singled and broken, it will seem more foreign and dissonant (*The Advancement of Learning*, p. 101).

The overall characteristics of philosophical doctrines should include information about the philosopher's personality; then all this information should be placed in the context of other developments in the history of thought. In this passage Bacon, citing the doctrines of Paracelsus, Telesio, Patrizi, and Gilbert, philosophers who had studied nature, emphasized that their doctrines be discussed, but only as extracts to keep the text from being too ponderous (*De dignitate*, Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. iv, pp. 360–61). By the systematic presentation of doctrines, the progressive development of the history of philosophy (its principal purpose) could be demonstrated, and Bacon emphasized that this should be kept in mind both for the planning of the work and the treatment of specific opinions about nature.

Bacon's approach is clearly innovative if compared with Renaissance histories, which either attempted to emulate Diogenes Laertius or adopted the sectarian attitudes of one of the great classical philosophies. He wished to sweep away sectarian views, because he thought such sectarianism made further advancements of philosophical knowledge impossible. Paolo Rossi has demonstrated that in *Partus temporis masculus* (1603), Bacon, reviewing ancient thought and the Renaissance thought that it had inspired (Ramus, Paracelsus, Telesio), condemned ancient "philosophasters" and their "fables". Bacon was not condemning historical research into ancient thought as worthless; but rather he was inviting historians to abandon the logic of sectarianism and urging them to investigate the speculative contributions of the past with an open mind. Ancient philosophies had only a retrospective but not a contemporary value: they could open up new areas of thought, but were not models to be followed. Using suggestions made by the ancients for

the rejection of errors or *idola* (*Temporis partus masculus*, Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. III, pp. 521–40), and unshakeable in his conviction that the Renaissance histories perpetuated an unjustifiable deference to tradition, Bacon proposed to give priority to the study of things.

The historiography of philosophy is therefore presented as the awareness of humanity's capacity for progress. The study of philosophers and their doctrines, in the context of the *historia litteraria*, would make it possible not only to demonstrate their errors, difficulties, and prejudices, but also to show how to overcome error, and to illustrate the achievement of human ingenuity. He perceived modern thought as the maturation of the past; indeed, it was 'ancient thought' in the proper sense of the term: "And to speak truly, *Antiquitas saeculi juvenus mundi*. These times are ancient times, when the world is ancient, and not those we account ancient *ordine retrogrado*, by computation back from ourselves" (*The Advancement of Learning*, p. 33). Ancient philosophies were therefore primitive forms of thought, to be studied not because of their perfection, but because of interest in reconstructing the results they attained.

The investigative method constituted the only true method of scientific study, and while philosophical historiography was important for scientific learning and training the mind, it was merely a back-up. In a passage in *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* (Bk. VI, ch. 2) Bacon argued that the study of the 'roots' of knowledge — i.e. the way the sciences developed — was preferable to the simple transmission of knowledge as it was. "So the method of transmitting knowledge which is now in use presents trunks as it were of sciences (and fair ones too), but without the roots; good for the carpenter but useless for the planter" (trans. of *De dignitate* from Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. IV, p. 450). The purpose was to replace the rigidly logical schemes, lacking all vitality and possibility for further growth, with knowledge capable of assimilating real intellectual developments because it perceived every science as a dynamic entity.

However the first great history of philosophy did not entirely incorporate Bacon's teachings. There was still life in the philological prejudice that the ancients had expressed all that was best in human thought, and that biographical histories were best able to illustrate the uniqueness of philosophical activity. Yet Thomas Stanley did put some of Bacon's suggestions to use. In his biographies of ancient philosophers, he adopted the concepts outlined in Bk. VII, ch. 3 of *De dignitate*, which spoke of "the culture of the mind" which was composed of "the characters of dispositions, the affections and remedies" (trans. of *De dignitate* from Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Vol. V, pp. 19–30). Stanley's history encapsulated the fusion of the active and the contemplative life in the character of a philosopher, and in this way reworked the Baconian, and therefore progressive, view that a classical model should be taken and developed in a new direction.

The History of Philosophy was the product of a philological culture that had assimilated Baconian ideas, but in a sense it was an isolated work, and no English historian followed this example of learned biography. The historical works inspired by the Cambridge Platonists were quite different from the biographies of philosophers. The influence of the work can be seen, however, in the increased interest in Diogenes Laertius. Apart from the anthology *The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, published in London in 1702 (discussed below in a more detailed account of Stanley's influence), a translation of Laertius's *Lives* by T. Fetherstone, S. White, E. Smith, J. Philips, R. Kippax, and W. Baxter was published in London in 1688, with a second edition in 1696. More important was the influence of Stanley's philological activities on other late seventeenth-century English philologists. Several critical studies written at that time clearly show the influence of Laertius's *Lives* and the *History of Philosophy*, the most famous of these being Bentley's study of the letters of Phalaris and Socrates. However, these works had no interest in a historical view. English philosophical historiography, which grew out of a philological tradition, came to a sudden halt. After the histories of the Cambridge School (see below, Ch. 3), no further general histories of philosophy were written in England until, almost a century later, William Enfield wrote his *History* modelled on Brucker's work. J. England's *Inquiry into the Morals of the Ancients* (London, 1735), a kind of ethical history, cannot really be considered an exception. It was up to the French and the Germans to develop the history of philosophy further, despite their late start.

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1. THOMAS STANLEY (1625-1678)
The History of Philosophy

1.1. Thomas Stanley (Stanleius), born in Cumberlow, Hertfordshire, in 1625, belonged to the local gentry; his tutor was William Fairfax, an enthusiastic scholar of Italian and French poetry. At the age of 14, he went to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he received a very thorough literary training, later studying law at Oxford. He was a successful poet, which led him to deepen his understanding of other European literatures, and he may have travelled to France for this purpose. In 1648 he married Dorothy, daughter of James Enyon of Flower, Northamptonshire. She brought him a considerable dowry, freeing him to work on his scholarship. Moving to London, he lodged at the Middle Temple, a college for law students, where he mixed with a sophisticated and cultured society and divided his time between law, poetry, and classical philology.

Thus he conceived *The History of Philosophy*, and after patient research he completed it before he was 28. He had been greatly encouraged by the historian, chronologist, and Egyptologist John Marsham (1602-1685), who had married Stanley's aunt. A review in the *Neue Bibliothec* (1711) compared Stanley to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, because of his youth and erudition. The young writer benefited greatly from reading Greek philosophy and literature, and became a skilful editor of classical texts. His edition of Aeschylus' tragedies based on the manuscript sources was much appreciated in England and on the continent. His philological activities kept him out of public life, and he preferred to cultivate the friendship of poets and philologists, whom he would bring together for discussions and poetry recitals — the philologist Edward Shelburne and the writers James Shirley and Edward Phillips were amongst his closest friends. He died in his London home in Suffolk Street, the Strand, on 12 April 1678, and was buried in the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

1.2. Stanley's first publication was *Poems and Translations* (London, 1647-1651), an anthology of his own poetry and translations of Italian, French, and Spanish authors (Tasso, Marino, Guarini, St-Amant, Ronsard, Garcilaso de la Vega, Góngora, Petrarch) as well as love poems both classical (Moschus' *Europa*, Ausonius' *Cupid Crucified*, the *Pervigilium Veneris*, and J. Secundus' *Baci*) and by such writers as Pérez de Montalban, G. Preti, and Pico della Mirandola (the commentary on Beniveni's *Canzone*). *Psalterium Carolinum* (London, 1657) was a collection of religious meditations in verse, dedicated to the memory of Charles I. Stanley's translation of Anacreon's *Odes* was included in the 1651 edition of his *Poems* and republished in 1893 (ed. A. H. Bullen). The poems and translations were published in two volumes (ed. S. E. Brydges, London, 1814-15; ed. L. I. Guiney, Hull, 1907; ed. G. M. Crump, Oxford, 1962).

As a philologist, Stanley is renowned for his edition of Aeschylus' tragedies (London, 1663), based on the best available English manuscripts (which came from the Bodleian

and Arundel libraries, and had been put at Stanley's disposal by John Selden), but which also took into account previous editions and emendations by Dorat, Scaliger, and Casaubon. He added a Latin translation and commentary to the Greek text. This edition was well received and continued to be published up to 1800. Cambridge University Library possesses a very thorough commentary on Aeschylus in manuscript. There are also manuscript lectures on Theophrastus' *Characters*.

However, Stanley's most famous work is undoubtedly *The History of Philosophy: Containing the Lives, Opinions, Actions and Discourses of the Philosophers of every Sect*, 4 vols. in fol. (London, 1655–62). There was a second edition published in London, 1687, 1 vol., 1091 pp. in fol.; a third, London, 1701, 633 + 63 pp. in fol.; and a fourth, London, 1743, 828 pp. in 4°. The translations will be discussed later, as the content was considerably altered. Quotations here are taken from the 1701 edition.

1.3. The short preface to *The History of Philosophy* briefly explains the reason for Stanley's interest in the ancient philosophers and the purpose of his work. This he felt to be different from anything that had been written before, and for historical reasons superior to a work like that of Diogenes Laertius, which had been the principal model in the late Renaissance. This is also demonstrated by the inclusion of two passages we have already discussed, one from Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (Bk. III, ch. 4) and the other from Montaigne's *Essais* (Bk. II, ch. 12), at the beginning of Vol. III (published in 1660), between part 8 and part 9 of *The History of Philosophy*, at the end of the discussion on the first group of sects derived from the Ionic School and before the Italic School. Both passages mention that the history of ancient thought is important if a proper discipline is to be instilled into philosophical practice. They also suggest that the modern historian should go further than the classical one, and organize the objective study of past philosophies. Yet Stanley had no intention of breaking with the humanistic tradition, whose approach to ancient philosophy had been either scholarly or didactic. He set out to use the lives and doctrines of the philosophers as examples of great men and paradigms for the interpretation of life and reality, but in addition he aimed to give an objective and rigorous exposition (as had been encouraged by Bacon and Montaigne), which led to an innovative presentation of the different philosophies.

Stanley wrote that history as *magistra vitae* was similar to painting, which intended to represent reality as it was. It could either describe general events affecting whole peoples, or attempt to know the personalities of the main protagonists in history. "Hence it is that there are two kinds of history: one represents general affairs of state, the other gives account of particular persons, whose lives rendered them eminent" (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1]). The same methodology was used for great philosophers who had investigated reality, nature, and the supreme moral, metaphysical, and religious truths, and for other men who had more obviously affected history, such as monarchs, great warriors, politicians, and statesmen. "Now the life of man being either practick, busied in civil affairs of peace and war,

or contemplative, retir'd from publick business to speculation of study of wisdom divine or humane, it follows that this personal history be two-fold likewise" (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1]). When writing history the *vita* would be the center of focus for Stanley, since decisive contribution of individuals to the history of a people or civilization required a description of character as well as intellectual and moral qualities.

According to Stanley, antiquity provided the definitive paradigms for the biographical genre and its influence could not be matched. He chose a structure that divided the lives of philosophers into separate chapters, listing all biographical details (nationality, parentage, events, physical characteristics, moral attitudes, vices, virtues, sayings, anecdotes, etc.), because it seemed the most efficient and truthful way of representing individual contributions to civilization. However, the classical biographies of philosophers were often in a fragmentary state, which meant that a complete and reliable understanding of philosophers' lives was no longer possible. Stanley referred to several other biographers, but he considered only Diogenes Laertius useful. Yet the remaining fragments of other authors led Stanley to conjecture about the richness of classical philosophical historiography. He thought that the scholar's task was to recover and integrate as much as possible into the information supplied by Diogenes Laertius. Still, the historian should be critical about these ancient biographical texts, and distinguish between those with a declared historical purpose and those of a poetic or apologetic nature, and not be content with simply amplifying biographical material.

Historiography was a rigorously philological method for Stanley, which when applied correctly gave proper weight to the description of each philosopher's personality. The comparison with painting at the beginning of the Preface was intended not only to demonstrate the objectivity of the historian's work; for a history of individuals, like a portrait, was concerned with representing particular aspects of an individual's personality, and was therefore morally more instructive than a history of general events which had an overall framework incapable of producing detailed considerations. "What is most particular, by its nearer affinity to us, hath greatest influence upon us" (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1]). Stanley used philological criticism to strengthen his biographical method, and, despite the fact that he did not scrutinize philosophical doctrines, he thought it important to give a clear account of the doctrines and individual theories in his critical study of the philosopher's life.

Stanley was adamant that history by means of 'lives' fulfilled a laudable cultural role because it avoided the kind of distortions that arose from an uncritical advocacy of a single philosophical sect. Associating the writing of objective biography to the work on revival of ancient sects during the Renaissance, Stanley considered it a primary objective to acquire a complete

understanding of all the sects in the ancient world and the positions of their founders and principal followers. It was important to him that the purpose of this knowledge was not to adopt a more partisan approach towards one sect nor argue better against the others; it was simply theoretical and intellectual. He rejected Gassendi's method of describing sects, which always reflected the thought and personality of Epicurus. In his dedication to his uncle, John Marsham, Stanley confessed that he admired the French thinker, but did not wish to follow his example (he particularly appreciated Gassendi's biographies of Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, Peurbach, Regiomontanus):

For he, tho' limited to a single person, yet giveth himself liberty of enlargement, and taketh occasion from this subject to make the world acquainted with many excellent disquisitions of his own, Our scope being of greater latitude, affords less opportunity to favour any particular, whilst there is due to everyone the commendation of their own deserts (*The History of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, prefatory letter 'To my Honoured Uncle').

The study of the single life was intended to shed light on all philosophy and to create a varied and animated picture resulting in a total harmony of details, not to be merely an indistinct and general treatment.

Stanley did not expressly comment on the historical development of philosophy or on the possible links between scientific, political, and cultural life. He considered it self-evident that philosophers, who deal with the supreme principles and causes, should occupy an important position in history. The relationship between the philosopher, the scientist, and the writer was not made absolutely clear: philosophical knowledge is close to both astrological knowledge and poetry, as may be seen from the examples Stanley draws from the lives of 'intellectuals', which were supposed to distinguish between those engaged in active life and those engaged in contemplative life. Equally inconclusive was the discussion at the end of the Preface on the origins of philosophy, and the relationship between the words 'wisdom' and 'philosophy':

Thus learning in the antientest times was by the Greeks called *Sophia* (wisdom) and the professour thereof, who raised his soul to an eminent degree of knowledge, *Sophos* (wise). Pythagoras first named it *Philosophy* (love of wisdom) and himself a *Philosopher*, affirming that no man is wise; but onely God.

As concerning those who were honoured with this attribute of *wise*, Damon the Cyrenaeen undervalues them all, especially the seven. Anaximenes saith, they were all addicted to Poetry; Dicaearchus, that they were neither wise men, nor Philosophers, but upright men and Lawgivers . . . There is some controversy concerning their sentences, of which some are ascribed to several persons . . . There is

no less dissent concerning their number (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1]).

The History of Philosophy was often very accurate in its treatment of the role of philosophy in ancient civilizations, but it never expressed an opinion on the relationship between philosophy and spiritual life. Thus it said nothing, even implicitly, about the nature of the history of thought; all that can be deduced from the work is that Stanley believed that philosophy was the essential contemplative activity, and was variously adopted in antiquity, giving rise to the great sects, whose interdependence must be clarified by the historian.

Stanley also thought that the history of the sects should never make room for judgements as to value or as to greater or lesser historical suitability. The historian's task was simply to follow the "progress" of philosophy, to investigate every innovation in its own time ("We look down to the bottom from which philosophy took her first rise, and see how great a progress she hath made, whose beginnings are almost inscrutable"). The progress of thought (as Garin has pointed out, 'progress' was used in the precise meaning of the term, without any Enlightenment overtones, cf. *La storia critica della filosofia*, p. 270) may even have eluded sense and reason, and the historian had "to see" their exact significance and link them to the present. In an age of 'rebirths', it was necessary to "restore" every doctrine to the time in which it was conceived and to evaluate the distance and the closeness between ancient and contemporary society (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1])

1.4. *The History of Philosophy*

1.4.1. The first edition had little influence outside England, and it is difficult to find a copy in the European universities, although Braun (p. 68 n.) has claimed that after 1660 extracts of *The History of Philosophy* were circulating in French translation. It was only with the second edition that the work became known in Dutch philological circles. The British Library has supplied us with photocopies of the indices, prefaces and tables of the first and second editions, and we have been able to consult the third edition directly (facsimile edn, Hildesheim, 1975). Only the first edition was published in four volumes: the first two volumes were published in 1655-6, the third in 1660, and the fourth, on Oriental philosophy (*Of the Chaldaick Philosophers*), in 1662. The successive English editions were all published in a single volume, but the structure retained the divisions imposed by the way the first edition was published. The text is illustrated with portraits of the principal ancient philosophers (not all, as Braun claimed (p. 69), unfaithful to their statues), and the chronological table is based on the succession of the Olympiads.

The 1701 edition of the work carries the same title as the second edition: *The History of Philosophy: containing the Lives, Opinions, Actions and Discourses of Every Sect*, and it opens with a portrait of the author (by W. Faithorne), a dedication to John Marsham, a preface, and an anonymous biography of the author: 'An Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Stanley Esquire'. There follows an table of contents of the work, an

index of the philosophers' lives, an index of authors and historians whose works are frequently quoted, and an index of all the philosophers mentioned. The main body of the work is divided into nineteen parts: each section contains discussion on one or more philosophers, and is subdivided into chapters of varying lengths. Some chapters are divided into sections, as they deal with parts of an author's philosophy. The parts are as follows: 1, 'Containing those on whom the Attribute of Wise was conferred'; 2, 'The Ionick Philosophers'; 3, 'The Socratick Philosophers'; 4, 'The Cirenaiick, Megarick, Eleack and Eretriack Sects'; 5, 'Academick Philosophers'; 6, 'The Peripatetick Philosophers'; 7, 'The Cynick Philosophers'; 8, 'The Stoick Philosophers'; 9, 'The Italick Sect'; 10, 'The Heraclitian Sect'; 11, 'The Eleatick Sect'; 12, 'The Sceptick Sect'; 13, 'The Epicurean Sect'; 14, 'Of the Chaldaean Philosophers'; 15, 'The Chaldaick Doctrine'; 16, 'The Persian Philosophers, their Sects and Institutions'; 17, 'The Doctrines of the Persians'; 18, 'The Sabaeen Philosophers'; 19, 'The Doctrines of the Sabaeans'. The text consists of 658 pages for the first thirteen parts and 63 pages for the remaining six parts on Oriental philosophy, which are numbered separately. A 'Chronological Table' is to be found at the end of part 13 and also between parts 3 and 4 on pp. 121–31, with the columns disposed differently and entitled simply 'Chronology'. The table at the end of part 13 includes lists of important place names, the more significant passages quoted in the work, the authors who had written on philosophers' lives and doctrines (with details briefly added, especially in the light of Renaissance criticism), and 'conjectures' on uncertain passages by classical authors. The last six parts in the 1701 edition (as in the preceding editions) constitute an almost separate work: *The History of Chaldaick Philosophy*. They are preceded by the same dedication to John Marsham, as may be found at the beginning of the work, and a preface specifically on the Oriental material about to be discussed. Part 19 ends with a copy of Patrizi's edition of the *Chaldean Oracles* (the Greek and Latin versions together with an English translation), an English translation of Pletho's and Psellus' comments on the *Oracles*, and some speculations on the Greek text of the *Oracles*.

The History of Philosophy began to gain a reputation in Europe after the Genevan scholar and theologian Jean Le Clerc (Clericus, 1657–1736) translated the part on Oriental thought into Latin, when he was teaching philosophy and Hebrew at Amsterdam university. It was published in Amsterdam in 1690 under the title: *Historia philosophiae orientalis recensuit, ex anglica lingua in latinum transtulit, notis in Oracula chaldaica et indice philologico auxit Johannes Clericus*. Le Clerc added indices to make the work easier to consult, and a preface in which he explained the usefulness of Stanley's objective approach to Chaldean thought and its relationship to Jewish and Greek thought. The usefulness of the fourth part of *The History of Philosophy*, devoted to Oriental thought, lay in its ability to clarify many aspects of patristic thought and theological controversies in the first centuries of the Church's existence through its references to Chaldean 'sources'. He excluded Psellus' and Pletho's comments on the *Oracles*, as they were of no assistance in understanding the work, and added a lengthy philological index. Le Clerc also added several notes on Stanley's text, which are mainly to be found in the appendix. Le Clerc's translation was also published in his *Opera philosophica*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1702; 2nd edn 1704, 3rd edn 1707, 4th edn 1710, 5th edn 1722), together with *Pneumatologia*.

Le Clerc's translation provoked a considerable desire to know the rest of the work in the Low Countries. Salomon Bor (Borrius) translated it into Dutch, and it was published with the portraits from the third English edition under the title *Historische beschrijving der grieksche en oostersche wijsgreeren, Behelsende der selver Daaden, Gevoelens en Gedenkwaardige Spreken . . . Lebensbedrijf der grieksche digteren beyde uyt de laatste engelsche drukken vertaalt door Salomon Bor*, in folio (Leyden, 1702).

The Latin translation was keenly awaited, but could only be completed after the considerable philological and linguistic difficulties connected with the passages translated by Stanley were dealt with. It came out in 1711, having been edited by the German theologian, scholar, and exponent of Pietism Gottfried Olearius (Leipzig, 1672–1715), then teacher of theology at Leipzig University, where he had also taught Greek and Latin for ten years (1699–1708). This edition did not carry the name of the translator, but it was universally attributed to him, as can be testified by the ‘Elogium’ which appeared in *Acta eruditorum* (1716, p. 237) on his death. The work was entitled *Historia philosophiae: vitas, opiniones, resque gestas, et dicta philosophorum sectae cujusvis complexa, ex anglico sermone in latinum translata, emendata, variis dissertationibus atque observationibus passim aucta*, 2 vols. in quarto, 1222 pp. continuously numbered, plus prefaces and indices (Leipzig, 1711).

Olearius added new material to Stanley’s text. Given that history of philosophy was by then an established genre, any work that had first been published nearly sixty years before needed to be treated with caution, as the errors and imperfections in the quotations and references leapt from the page. He defined the work as “a medley, woven together of the very words of the ancient authors, and general arguments (*loci communes*) on the history of philosophy, arranged in the best order”, and for this reason some additions and corrections were indispensable. However, although footnotes corrected specific philological and historical errors and passages lacking clarity, Olearius acted with discretion and did not upset the work’s structure. Where Stanley had translated Greek or Latin passages into English, he used the original text, which he carefully revised. He added some text of his own to fill in gaps in the original: a dissertation he had given in Leipzig in 1702, *De genio Socratis*, which clarified some aspects of Socrates’ use of *Genius* or ‘Daemon’ (*Historia*, Vol. 1, pp. 134–67); a dissertation or *schediasma*, *De scriptis Socratis*, which opposed the publication of the supposed letters of Socrates by the Italo-Greek scholar Leone Allacci (Allatius: 1586–1669) in Paris in 1637, which Stanley had considered to be authentic and quoted in *The History of Philosophy* on pp. 100–102 (in *Historia*, the *Epistolae Socratis* are on pp. 200–207 and the *schediasma* on pp. 208–19; it substitutes for some passages from Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, in which Socrates appeared as a protagonist and as an object of esteem, quoted on pp. 103–13 of *The History of Philosophy*); some of Plato’s letters edited by Olearius (*Historia*, Vol. 1, pp. 334–5); an additional list of ancient and modern Aristotle commentators (*Historia*, Vol. 11, pp. 33–4); a lengthy additional passage on Diogenes of Sinope (*Historia*, Vol. 11, pp. 112–55); and two dissertations “ex mente Heracliti”: *De principio rerum naturalium* and *De rerum γενεσει*, which made up for Stanley’s scanty treatment of Heraclitus’ mystical doctrines and demonstrated the latter’s ‘theology’ of Destiny and Necessity (*Historia*, Vol. 11, pp. 452–81). The most important addition is Olearius’ treatment of the *Philosophia eclectica*, which he placed at the end of the part on Oriental thought.

The ‘Chronological Table’, which in the English edition appeared at the end of the section on Greek thought, was placed immediately after the list of contents at the beginning; the ‘Chronology’ kept its position in the middle of the work. All the other indices were moved to the end of the work. Olearius eliminated Reuchlin’s comments on Pythagoras’ doctrine, which Stanley had inserted at the end of part 8, considering their treatment unreliable because excessively contaminated by the author’s interest in cabalism. He also excluded Stanley’s lengthy summary of Sextus Empiricus’ *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, which represented the overall sceptic position (only Stanley’s discussion of Pyrrho and Timon remained in part 11), justifying this abridgement by pointing out that there already existed a Latin translation by Fabricius. Olearius used Le Clerc’s *Philosophia orientalis* complete with his additions and indices.

Some small alterations were also made to the structure of the parts as they had appeared in the 1701 edition. The analysis of the minor Socratic sects (the Cyrenaics, the school of Elis, and the Eretrian and Megarian schools) was included in part 3 on Socrates' thought. Part 4 in Olearius' edition therefore corresponds to part 5 in the English edition. Similarly Olearius included parts 14 and 15 of the English edition in part 13 (the separate parts had dealt respectively with the Chaldeans in general and with their doctrines), parts 16 and 17 of the English edition in part 14 (these had dealt respectively with the Persians and their doctrines), and parts 18 and 19 in part 15 (these had dealt respectively with the Sabaeans and their doctrines). There is thus a total of 15 parts. Contrary to established opinion, the biography *Vita et Scripta Thomae Stanleii Equitis* was not written by Olearius, but only translated by him from 'An Account of the Life . . .', which was already in the 1701 edition. This destroys certain theories on the new awareness of the role of philosophical historiography supposedly contained in this life of Stanley (see for example Rak, pp. 87-9). In reality, the biography simply summarizes for the English readership Stanley's methodology and the main arguments contained in *The History of Philosophy*, without any attempt to break new ground. The imprecise information in the biography and its important omissions cannot therefore be attributed to Olearius, as did the author of the entry on Stanley in the *Biografia universale antica e moderna* (Vol. LV, p. 14), but goes back to the unknown English author. To avoid repeating these errors, Heumann obtained more reliable information from William Wotton, who was related to Stanley and published a new version of Stanley's life in the 'Elogium Thomae Stanleii', an appendix to his edition of a work by Sainte-Marthe, *Elogium Gallorum saeculo XVI doctrina illustrium* (Eisenach, 1722).

The Leipzig edition firmly established Stanley's reputation. This version was extremely successful and almost completely replaced the English one. The London edition of 1743 adopted Olearius' modifications. A further edition of the Latin translation was published by Sebastian Colet in Venice in 1731, 3 vols., 1304 pp. altogether (Vol. I, 424 pp.; Vol. II, 484 pp.; Vol. III, 396 pp.). The only changes from Olearius' edition were in the order of the indices. The list of contents, for example, was placed after the Chronological Table, which is repeated half way through Vol. I. No new parts were added. The discussion on the *Philosophica eclectica*, which till now had been attributed to an unknown author and was supposedly written for the Venice edition, was already contained in the Leipzig edition and is almost certainly by Olearius.

The events affecting the various publications of *The History of Philosophy* have lead us to examine not only the first edition (1655-62), but all editions with their various modifications, because they reflect the gradual developments in philosophical historiography over more than half a century. To simplify references, we shall always quote from the English edition of 1701. Where we refer to additional material in the Latin edition, we shall quote from the Venice edition of *Historia philosophica*, which we consider the best.

1.4.2. Stanley's periodization follows the traditional division of the ancient philosophical sects into the Italic and Ionic Schools. Before dealing with the question of the two philosophical traditions, Stanley discussed in some detail the Wise Men, who were always considered to be seven (Thales, Solon, Chilon, Pittacus, Bias, Cleobulus, Periander; there was controversy over whether the term 'Wise Man' should be attributed to Myson, Epimenides, Anacharsis, and Pherecydes). He then reviews the Ionic philosophers, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Archelaus, and the heirs to this school, whom

he considered to be Socrates and the Socratic philosophers, both those who were closest to him like Xenophon, Aeschines Socraticus, Crito, Simon, Glaucon, Simmias, Cebes, and also those who really belonged to sects, like the Cyrenaics (Aristippus, Hegesias, Anniceris, Theodorus, Bio), the Megarian school (Euclid, Diodorus, Stilpo), the school of Elis and the Eretrian school (Phaedo, Plisthenes, and Menedemus). He then moved on to Plato and the very first Academics (Speusippus, Xenocrates), the 'Middle' Academics (Arcesilaus, Lacydes) and the 'New' Academics (Carneades, Clitomachus, Philo, and Antiochus), Aristotle and the Peripatetics (Theophrastus, Strato, Lyco), the Cynics (Antisthenes and Diogenes of Sinope) and the Stoics (Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus were presented separately as the founders; the doctrines of the other Stoics form a single section, and there were only brief references to Zeno of Sidon, Diogenes, Antipater, Panaetius, and Posidonius). The Italic sect started with Pythagoras, followed by Empedocles, Heraclitus, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Melissus, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus, Protagoras, Anaxarchus, Pyrrho, and Timon. The last link in this philosophical chain descending from the Italic sect was Epicurus, whom Stanley discusses in great detail.

The historical period covered by Stanley ran from the time when Thales flourished in Ionia (c.585 BC) up to Panaetius and Posidonius, exponents of the *media Stoa* (the second century BC). Thus he did not consider the Romano-Alexandrian era, and ignored all Neoplatonic thought and the further developments of Stoicism. The references to Cicero, Iamblichus, Proclus, and Porphyry, as well as to the Church Fathers, were all used as 'sources' for broadening the knowledge of Greek thought. Apart from the example of Laertius, this exclusion of several centuries of Greek philosophy can be explained by Stanley's conviction that ancient thought had already created all the important schools and doctrines by the time of the Stoics and Epicurus, and that the Neoplatonists were merely restating previous doctrines in differing combinations. A further demonstration of this attitude is the use of the leading Neoplatonist Iamblichus simply as a 'historian' of Pythagoras' thought.

The last part of the work is not in chronological order. The author analysed some Oriental philosophies: more precisely those of the Chaldeans, Persians, and Sabaeans, which all preceded Greek philosophy. Quite probably Stanley decided only later, for the sake of comprehensiveness, to analyse Oriental philosophies. The fact that the fourth part was published as long as seven years after the first (1655-62) attests that it had not been prepared at the time when he was working on Greek thought, and perhaps he had not even considered it. Indeed, in the preface of 1655 he merely referred to the Oriental origins of philosophy without any attempt at a periodization of Oriental thought. The fourth part must therefore have been conceived as an appendix so that the doctrines of Pythagoras and Plato might be better understood.

The author was determined to place all thinkers within the traditional framework of the Greek sects as described by Diogenes Laertius. In fact, Stanley made no amendments to the chronological order of the philosophers set out in Laertius' *Lives*, and no attempt to link one sect to another. The succession of the schools was accepted almost as an indisputable fact and was never directly linked to historical events, which appear only as a background in the lives of the philosophers.

In the chronological table, which Stanley was encouraged to create by his uncle John Marsham, general historical events were linked to events in the history of philosophy and to philosophers' lives. Different boxes indicated the Olympiads, the more important Athenian archons, some of the victors in the Olympics, events in the lives of philosophers and poets, and finally the kings of Rome, the Emperors of Persia, or tyrants of some of the Greek cities. According to Stanley, the 'philosophical era' commenced three years after the 49th Olympiad, when the title of 'wise' was conferred on Thales (and the other six Wise Men, cf. *The History of Philosophy*, p. 26), under the archonship of Damasius. This system of numbering years for philosophical events was not really an attempt at periodization, its main purpose being to facilitate the treatment of the philosophers' lives. The idea of numbering years from the high point in Thales' life merely re-emphasized that the only true philosophical thought was Greek — commencing with Thales and without reference to Oriental thought, which was defined as pre-philosophical.

The 'philosophical era' lasted for just 454 years, until the fourth year after the 152nd Olympiad (129 BC), when Carneades died. This period did not even serve a didactic purpose — for much of it no events are recorded. From the philosophical year '261' (322 BC), recorded as the year of Aristotle's death, until '454' there were no references to events concerning philosophy. Evidently Stanley intended to fill in these gaps, but never had the time to do so. Neither successive English editions nor the Latin translations attempted to complete the chronological table, which remained imperfect.

1.4.3. The scanty periodization was reflected in Stanley's overall interpretation of the development of ancient thought. Indeed, he did not present us with a comprehensive overview of the history of the philosophical sects. It is, however, possible to infer from his orderly expositions some basic theses, here and there made explicit, elsewhere merely implied by his arguments. The preface made the distinction between wisdom and philosophy, and this characterized his reasoning throughout the work. According to Stanley, philosophy first appeared in the East, but its decisive development occurred in Greece and was initiated by Thales. He held that the Athenian claims that Greek thought originated with Musaeus, Linus of Thebes, and Orpheus of Thrace, were worthless fables, and that only Thales brought the knowledge of nature, geometry, and arithmetic to Greece and then started to

investigate them seriously. Thales was given the title of 'Wise Man' for having brought the attention of the Greeks to these things, not for any mystical reason. Stanley emphasizes that this honour simply reflected how the Greek peoples recognized the profundity of his ideas: "Thus learning in the antientest times was by the Greeks called *Sophia* (wisdom) and the professour thereof, who raised his soul to an eminent degree of knowledge, *Sophos* (wise)" (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1])

The East did develop a method for investigating things which also had certain religious characteristics, as Stanley pointed out in his analysis of Chaldean astrology and theurgy (*The History of Philosophy*: 'History of the Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 16, 20-21), but it was characterized above all by a search for deeper knowledge whose very breadth informed both theory and practice, without clear distinction. The Greeks transformed this wisdom by developing ethics and natural theory at the expense of religion and theology. Stanley argued that the title of 'Wise Man' was given to those who excelled "for their eminence in morality and politicks" (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1]; see also the section on Solon for an example of his treatment of a "wise man and legislator": *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 15-32). In the introductions to the different Greek philosophers, Stanley underscored the distinction between wisdom and philosophy in the attempt to humanize their relationship, in spite of uncertainty over the role of wisdom, which is sometimes considered divine and sometimes not. When, for example, he introduces the doctrine of the Stoics, he states that wisdom is "the science of things divine and humane", and that philosophy is "the exercitation of convenient art", that is, that wisdom is capable of greater knowledge, and philosophy, aware of this capability, tends towards that greater knowledge (*The History of Philosophy*, p. [302], misnumbered 308).

The transition from 'wisdom' to 'philosophy', which occurred after Thales, was thus distinguished by a greater natural and ethical, rather than religious, awareness of man and things. For Greek thinkers, wisdom in the strict sense of the word concerned the divine, and was assigned to man as a means of investigating those things governed by God, namely the perfect beings (*The History of Philosophy*, 'Preface', p. [1] and p. 394). According to Stanley, the concept of wisdom was naturalized and humanized by the Greeks, but a radical switch from myth to reason did not happen, for wisdom was seen to be a form of knowledge based on myths. Oriental people possessed a knowledge of things which differed from that developed by Greek philosophers, as they had less ability to discriminate and systematize. However, Greek philosophical activity never rejected religious investigation, and also made use of myths; clear examples of this could be found in the philosophies of Plato, Pythagoras, and Empedocles. Philosophy, therefore, was seen to use reason in the widest sense of the term; this also included recourse to symbols, imagery, and myths.

There is no theory of continuity between Oriental wisdom and Greek thought in *The History of Philosophy*. Stanley concerned himself only with two 'wisdoms' in vogue during the Renaissance: the Chaldean and the Persian, which both relied heavily on the thought and personality of Zoroaster. He ignored Jewish and Egyptian thought, which Vossius considered the origin of all ancient thought. This lacuna cannot be explained by lack of knowledge of Jewish and Egyptian thought, given that he must have been well acquainted with his uncle's studies on the chronology of ancient Egypt, which culminated in the publication of *Canon chronicus aegyptiacus* (London, 1672), and Selden's work *De iure naturae et gentium iuxta disciplinam Ebraeorum* (Strasbourg, 1665). It was the result of the author's decision to leave out a field of study that was perhaps too complex (especially after Casaubon had dated the *corpus Hermeticum* in his *Exercitationes de rebus sacris et ecclesiasticis* (London, 1614), which questioned the very existence of a wisdom emanating from Trismegistus); rather he concentrated his attention on evidence more closely connected with his Greek authors. The account of Chaldean, Persian, and Sabaeen thought was not intended to be an essay on the origins of wisdom, but rather the description of some Oriental philosophies which classical thought knew of and about which it wrote some historical accounts. Stanley's interest in the *Chaldean Oracles* did not mean that he supported the theory of continuity between Oriental and Platonic thought. He was well aware of the arguments, given that he included the Greek text and Patrizi's version, but he did not comment on their validity, keeping faith with his method of taking examples from texts and clearly describing each doctrine.

Stanley believed Chaldean thought preceded Egyptian thought, and rejected the idea that the Egyptians imparted their wisdom to the Chaldeans and Jews. On the question of the antiquity of Chaldean thought, he could not agree with the fantastic figure that had been suggested of 470,000 years between the beginning of the Chaldean civilization and the conquest of Babylon by Alexander the Great. He did believe, however, that the development of the Chaldean's thought and of their astronomical observations stretched over a very long period, and spoke of 4,000 years between their beginnings and the age of Julius Caesar. They thus had the longest tradition of speculations on nature and the movement of heavenly bodies (*The History of Philosophy*: 'History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 1-2), but their theoretical activities only began with their regular astronomical observations. Stanley attributed to Zoroaster the decisive move towards systematic speculation, even though it happened within a religious and astrological framework. This did not mean that the mythical Chaldean thinker was the initiator of a wisdom that was destined to spread over the centuries by virtue of its divine origin. It was not considered significant that he was the first thinker in history; it was, however, that scholars could not agree who Zoroaster was or

when he lived, and tended to believe that there were several wise men of this name who lived amongst different peoples (the Chaldeans, the Persians). This made the study of his identity extremely problematic, and deprived him of his aura of sanctity (*The History of Philosophy*: 'History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 2-3).

According to Stanley, the historical Zoroaster did not exercise all the influence that was attributed to him; simply the first of a series of wise men, he was the one who unified the wealth of speculations already known to the Chaldean people and made them more coherent ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 3-4). Although he did not go into much detail over the social and religious role of these wise men (Stanley names some of them, e.g. Belus and Berossus), he implied that the Chaldean doctrines were the product of a group of people dedicated to study and contemplation for reasons which were both religious and political. The fact that the name Zoroaster was attributed to wise men by other peoples, like the Persians, demonstrated that neighbouring peoples started to develop Chaldean wisdom. The spread of Chaldean thought over the centuries followed a complex path and irregular periods of expansion, which can be historically verified. Chaldean thought in its entirety was made known very late to the Greek world, by Berossus in the Hellenic era ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 5-6). However, before this Chaldean priest wrote his work designed to propagate his tradition, Greek thinkers had already assimilated Chaldean thought very fruitfully if not very systematically. Plato and Pythagoras integrated the knowledge of Chaldean wisdom into their own philosophies to such an extent that it was now difficult to identify which aspects of the Chaldean doctrines they had known and the influence they had had (see the Preface to 'History of Chaldaick Philosophy', in which Stanley states that what was left of Chaldean philosophy "is chiefly transmitted to us by the Greeks, of whom some converted it to their own use, intermixing it with their philosophy, as Pythagoras and Plato; others treated expressly of it, but their writings are lost").

Stanley's treatment of Chaldean thought threw light on the existence of several sects of wise men or thinkers characterized by their geographical origins or the disciplines. Although they formulated philosophy on many topics (natural philosophy, theology, divination, and astrology), on the other hand, they also demonstrated a substantial doctrinal unity — all the sects divided reality into three orders (attributed to Zoroaster and presented in the *Oracles*): the order of eternal things (Unity or Fire, and the Trinity), the order of thinking and immortal things (spirits and souls), and the order of corruptible things. The literature on the *Oracles* led Stanley to argue that the Chaldean gods belonged to a hierarchy that emanated various degrees of perfection. There was also a complex hierarchy of spiritual entities (angels and demons) and corporeal entities, some perfect and incorruptible and

some corruptible — the material demons were among the latter ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 8–24). As a consequence the Chaldeans attached great importance to astrological studies, divination, and magic (both natural and theurgical). Stanley interpreted these practices as the expression of a wisdom that worshipped and honoured all realities that were identified as such: God, divine beings, demons, heavenly bodies, and corruptible bodies. There was real continuity between Chaldean theology and religious practices, because their wisdom was neither purely theoretical nor purely practical, and made no distinction between contemplation and the active search for good. It evoked good and struggled against evil: the lower and malevolent forces were pitted against the higher forces of good ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 22–9).

Stanley's treatment of the Persians and Sabaeans confirms this concept of wisdom; both peoples owed their wisdom to the Chaldeans. The Persian magi took their doctrines from Zoroaster and developed them in a way very similar to the Chaldeans ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 30–34). He did not believe that a dualistic theology based on the struggle between good and evil was central to Persian thought, as with the Chaldeans; dualism only existed in the material and demonic realities, but not in the Godhead. Stanley regarded Sabaeen thought as a corruption of Chaldean thought. These Arab peoples had lowered themselves to idolatry, because they had not known how to develop a suitable perception of God on their own, and their dependence on the Chaldeans had been so great that they were incapable of developing an independent theology ('History of Chaldaick Philosophy', pp. 36–9). For Stanley, Oriental thought was an important chapter in the history of thought, but it did not have any particular religious or mystical significance for later philosophy; it was a 'comprehensive' approach to the study of realities and their principles.

The Seven Wise Men of Greece adopted Oriental doctrines and concepts, but they broke with the earlier intuitive approach that had not differentiated between nature and man. Stanley described how Thales established true philosophy with its own system of nature by describing a fundamental perception of things. He naturalized Chaldean concepts in theology by simplifying and freeing them from their magical and theurgical elements. In place of these practices and speculations he put geometry (taken from the Egyptians), astronomy, a 'naturalized' astrology interwoven with 'moral' rather than religious forecasts, and a 'moral' wisdom consisting of maxims concerning an individual's behaviour towards himself and other people (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 8–13). According to Stanley, Thales practically viewed God as the rational artificer of the world, and thus his interpretation eliminated almost all mystery. Basing himself on Cicero's *De natura deorum*, Stanley attributed the notion of *mens* that governed the world to Thales rather than Anaxagoras (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 6). According to many classical and

patristic accounts, several aspects of Thales' doctrines came from the Phoenicians, but in Stanley's opinion Thales did not adopt all their doctrines, only certain notions that he needed. For example, the Phoenicians, following a suggestion by Moses, had developed the notion that water was the source of all things; but in Thales' speculations water assumed the physical characteristic of a 'cause', eliminating its religious and mystical implications (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 5-6).

The natural development from wise man to philosopher is represented by the change between Thales and his disciple and fellow-citizen Anaximander (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 60). Stanley explained that Anaximander's thought takes on a direction that does not allow for his teacher's interpretation of nature, and, above all, he could accept water as the origin of all things. However, Stanley did not define what made him a philosopher rather than a wise man; equally, when he stated that Anaxagoras was the founder of the Ionic sect, he did not justify this by pointing out any speculative innovation Anaxagoras might have made (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 61). Stanley does not define the characteristics of the Ionic sect, and can only distinguish it on the basis of the *diadochi*. After Anaximander came Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus, who concluded the direct succession of Ionic philosophers in the strict sense of the term. Their philosophy was described as mainly concerned with nature, and therefore differed from the type of investigation carried out by the Wise Men. Their moral teachings were to be revived by Socrates in a more rational and systematic framework.

Stanley's interpretation of Socratic thought is particularly significant, as it represented a new phase in the history of the philosophical sects, and the Ionic sect became the Socratic sect. Stanley does not accept that this continuation of a line that started with Anaximander can be defined as Ionic, but he remained faithful to Laertius' idea that the Socratic school developed from Ionic thought (received from Archelaus), and that it was handed on in a profoundly altered form to Plato and the Platonists. Stanley describes Socrates' philosophy as purifying the theological and moral concepts of the Ionic school; and, using as his basis the classical accounts and interpretations of Plato, Cicero, and even Xenophon, he attributed to Socrates a monotheist view (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 77-8) as well as a moral outlook that made a considerable advance on the tradition of Thales' wisdom. Stanley devotes ample space to the events around Socrates' death and his method of teaching. An image is built up, in the humanist tradition, of Socrates as a pre-Christian sage and philosopher, who found the path to Christian truth without the light of the Revelation, and who, by natural means, prefigured certain moral truths — a 'spirit' or genius who spoke to man's conscience and guided his actions (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 83-5). Stanley considers Socrates to have come to an understanding of God and the world that prepared the way for Platonic idealism. Indeed he thought that Socratic

doctrines were all to be found in Plato's writings and could hardly be distinguished from them. The doctrine of Ideas, for instance, was the highest achievement of Socrates' speculations, aimed at adapting man's aspirations to Truth and Good, and as a basis for his convictions on immortality (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 77-8).

The immediate disciples of Socrates did not understand Socratic philosophy in its entirety, developing only some peripheral elements of his thought leading to ambivalent and aberrant concepts (as in the case of Aristippus, who ended up declaring bodily pleasure to be the Ultimate Good; *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 131-5). Plato, on the other hand, combined Socratic teaching (on ethics) with Pythagorean doctrines (on 'intelligence'), Heraclitus' philosophy (on 'sensibility'), and Oriental wisdom (mainly taken from the writings of Moses; *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 158-9, 161). Stanley's attitude to Plato was midway between the religious and mystical exaltation of the Neoplatonic tradition (which he followed up in his quotation from Steuco on p. 159) and an overcritical re-evaluation typical of some Aristotelian philosophers and Counter-Reformation figures in the Renaissance (starting with Crispo). For Stanley the importance of Plato's thinking lay in the combination of practical wisdom and thought that was captured in the dialogue (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 162, 174) and the analytical method it initiated, under the influence of contemporary mathematicians (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 162; the anonymous author of 'An Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Stanley Esquire' claims that Cartesian thought is a return to this method, p. [7]).

Stanley regarded Plato's thought as technically and speculatively more complete than that of his teacher, but not more advanced in supreme truths and practical wisdom. He did not demonstrate the genuine empathy for Plato that he demonstrated for Socrates, whom Stanley particularly admired for his moral coherence and instinctive application of doctrines to general behaviour. On the other hand, his exposition of Plato's thought is detailed and complete — the philosopher's personality and teaching method are vividly described along with events in his life (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 154-8, 166-73). All his works are listed, and their structure and style discussed in depth (the tetralogies and trilogies, from Trasillus and Aristophanes; *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 174-7). Finally Stanley described the doctrines very much along the lines of the *Epitome* (or 'Introduction to Platonic Philosophy') attributed to Alcinous (or to Albinus, a Middle Platonist, according to recent research; *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 196-207) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's comment on Girolamo Beniveni's *Canzone d'amore* (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 196-207; Stanley translated this in 1651, as we have noted: cf. *Poems*, ed. Crump, pp. 197-229).

It would seem that Stanley had a greater interest in Socrates than in Plato because he had a preference for doctrines in which moral speculations

created a code of behaviour that synthesized theoretical and practical attitudes to the truth, and as a result he carefully illustrated the Platonic system because it derived from the inherent needs of Socratic teaching. His treatment of Aristotle is further confirmation of this attitude: while he was thorough in his description of the philosopher's life and writings, he was somewhat indifferent to his moral character. Stanley concentrated mainly on the theoretical aspects of Aristotle's doctrines — dialectics, natural philosophy, psychology, and metaphysics (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 244–60, 266–9) — while being more schematic in his treatment of ethics and politics (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 260–66). He dealt with logic and natural philosophy before metaphysics (which came last, after a meagre discussion of ethics). Metaphysics was in fact treated as the crowning achievement of the entire system, with its doctrine of God, the Pure Act. Aristotelian theology was not studied in depth; this, too, demonstrated Stanley's perception of Aristotle's philosophy as scientifically systematic and lacking a comprehensive ethical approach, a useful body of doctrines of both the theory of demonstration and the natural world.

Stanley preferred moral philosophies descended from Socrates' teachings, namely the Cynics (he discussed Diogenes of Sinope in depth and listed his sayings: *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 284–90) and the Stoics, who were described as developing from the Cynics (Zeno was supposed to have been a pupil of Crates of Thebes: *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 293–4). According to Stanley, Zeno and his followers and successors had a very exalted concept of God (whom they believed to be one, but called in many of his operations under different names: *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 333–5) and of man's dignity as a rational being destined for happiness and for the practice of virtue (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 326). Moreover, Zeno joined this profound vision with a rigorous code of conduct that reached for moral perfection. The Stoics taught complete contempt for contingent pleasures, a serenity in face of death, and a balanced attitude to the assaults of fortune (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 318–21). Stanley is clearly in agreement with their natural, theological, and moral doctrines, as he is with their logic, which he studied much more thoroughly than he had the Aristotelian logic.

In the history of the speculative tradition that took its beginning from Pythagoras, Stanley's preference was equally for systems whose moral doctrines made a norm for life. Pythagoras fulfilled the same role in the Italic sect as Thales had for the Ionic sect; he was the founder who brought the Oriental wisdom he had acquired in Phoenicia, Egypt, and Chaldea (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 349–51) to the peoples of Greek origin. Stanley did not differentiate greatly between Thales the 'wise man' and Pythagoras the 'philosopher' and inventor of the term 'philosophy', whose thought was in part taken from the 'wise man' Pherecydes. If anything, he attributed to Pythagoras a moral doctrine that was richer and more developed than that

of Thales. In fact, he had already devoted a long poem to the subject, 'Pythagoras, his Moral Rules', which appeared in his *Poems* in 1651. The link with the East would appear to have been stronger in Pythagoras' case than in Thales', given that writers of both the Hellenistic age and the patristic period attested to the Oriental origins of his writings, in particular for its emphasis on the ritual of initiation (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 366-9). The description of the doctrines and discipline of the Pythagorean school consolidated this interpretation of its nature full of wisdom. Stanley extensively discussed the characteristics of the Pythagorean community and its moral code (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 371-6), enumerating the speculations that led to the development of philosophy (from arithmetic to music, geometry, and astronomy, i.e. the complete symbolic science of numbers: *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 377-94), and finally setting out the nature of 'philosophy' true and proper, which appeared as an amplification but not an abandonment of wisdom. The 'philosophy' of Pythagoras was simply a sapiential doctrine that had acquired a deep awareness of the links between man and the world, through asceticism based on the symbolism of numbers (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 394-410).

Stanley's interpretation of Pythagoras' thought accepted with no critical or historical questioning all the Platonic or Neoplatonic literature, including Iamblichus' exegesis (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 410-16). However, the treatment of Pythagoras reflects a desire to clarify by philological technique a *corpus* of doctrines that were of both a mystical and initiatory nature (as in the case of the *scientiae* that prepare for philosophy). Overall Pythagorean thought is considered to be close to Platonic speculation, but differing from it in the greater emphasis it placed on number symbolism and its well-structured natural philosophy and anthropology. The fact that Stanley included Reuchlin's explanation of Pythagoras' doctrine taken from *De arte Cabbalistica* demonstrates that his philological interest in Pythagoras and his study of Renaissance expositions intended to present Pythagoras as an instructor in matters of life, wisdom, and science (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 423-8).

In the line of Pythagorean thought Stanley included all those who linked the science of nature to its symbols and from those symbols deduced a code of behaviour. He thus includes Empedocles, Epicharmus, Archytas, Alcmaeon, Hippasus, Philolaus, and Eudoxus (the 'Pythagoreans': *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 429-37). He mentioned Heraclitus as an obscure thinker concerned only with natural symbolism, and as aristocratic because of his contempt for the obtuseness of the masses (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 438-44). Finally he dealt with the Eleatics, whose thought had a considerable symbolic element, as in the dialectic of ideas developed by Plato's *Parmenides* (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 448-9) or in Zeno of Elea's dialectic (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 450-51). Stanley emphasizes the moral

nature of Democritus' atomistic theory (Democritus was considered the leading exponent of the Eleatic sect), linking it to his notion of the tranquil spirit (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 455), which he argued was the natural outcome of the relationship between man's senses and things (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 465-7). Stanley's approach to the Sceptics is very similar, and he analyses their arguments systematically and in great detail, because he perceived them to have made an affirmation of a moral serenity towards all things. He used Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* to illustrate the Sceptic doctrine, but he did not count this author amongst the 'original' Sceptics, whom he considered to be Pyrrho and Timon. Sextus Empiricus' work led Stanley to believe that the Sceptic position was one of the most balanced from both a theoretical and moral point of view, its purpose being to create an attitude of mind that could deal with both contemplation and action (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 475-8, 524-32).

The series of sects that, with varied titles, originated from the Pythagorean School ended with the Epicureans, whose philosophical method Stanley found most to his taste. Epicurus was a true master of life, and his doctrines converged marvellously in an ethical synthesis that assured man domination over his own passions, control of his desires, and, in short, authentic happiness (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 547-8). The homogeneity of the Epicurean School testified to the value of this synthesis; none of his successors felt the need to modify a single aspect of his theses. The Epicurean system achieved a systematic integration of the search for truth and the search for happiness, without exposing any weak points requiring the development of further arguments. Epicurus pointed the way to tranquillity of mind through the study of nature (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 544-5; see also the *apologia* of Epicurus, drawn from Diogenes Laertius, on pp. 545-6).

Stanley's preference is underscored by his ample treatment of Epicurus' thought, which drew on the works of Gassendi and on Lucretius' *De rerum natura* (from which he translated some passages into English).¹ Particularly significant is his treatment of natural philosophy, which was closely linked to ethics, because man was a conscious and rational part of nature (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 555). Epicurus' ethics differed in this respect from the concept of pleasure argued for by the Cyrenaic sect founded by Aristippus. Epicurus linked the search for happiness to evenly balanced desire, and not unbridled and indiscriminate desires unrelated to nature and its laws (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 633).

Stanley did not see any historical problem in placing Epicurean philosophy at the end of a speculative tradition that originated in the Greek

¹ For an analysis of Stanley's translations of *De rerum natura* and the paraphrases used for *The History of Philosophy*, cf. W. B. Fleischmann, *Lucretius and English Literature, 1680-1740* (Paris, 1964), pp. 95-103. However, the comparison between Lucretius' text and the translations was carried out using the 1743 London edition, which, as has already been pointed out, was extensively corrected following the observations of Olearius.

colonies in Southern Italy. Apart from accepting Laertius' derivation, he did not worry about explaining the transition of one school to another. The line of sects from the Pythagoreans was always considered to be direct: the philosophies of Heraclitus, the Eleatics (who include Leucippus, Parmenides, Democritus, Protagoras, and Anaxarchus), and the Sceptics are all seen as developments directly from Pythagorean thought — but in different directions, all retaining that close relationship between theoretical speculation and practical life Stanley held so dear. Thus, Epicurus' philosophy appears as the ideal synthesis of the preceding positions, rather than the end of a string of derivations. Unlike Vossius, who accepted Laertius' version, Stanley claimed that Epicureanism did not derive solely from atomism, but adopted in many instances the moral positions of Scepticism and Heraclitism. In the chapter on the teachers of Epicurus, he refers to a wide range of possible influences that went from Democritus and Metrodorus to Pamphilus the Platonist and Nausiphanes, both Sceptic and Platonist (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 535–6).

Stanley's *History* does not contain any interpretative theories, even solely on the historical level, on the development of ancient thought. Vossius' brief work, although in many ways incomplete and backward when compared to Stanley, did contain some basic theses on the development of classical thought, though within a traditional biographical and doxographical context. These permitted Vossius to assert the historical and logical pre-eminence of Scepticism and Eclecticism. Stanley, on the other hand, did not completely develop any basic theory, but only managed to imply the pre-eminence of a series of thinkers and sects, who combined theoretical knowledge with a code of conduct to form a rational moral synthesis. Olearius must have been in part aware of this, as he completed the discussion of moral and theoretical philosophies with an analysis of the Eclectic view (started by Potamon and held by Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, St Clement of Alexandria, and Origen), which had been ignored by Stanley.

The section 'De philosophia eclectica' can throw some light on Stanley's position. Very probably he did not discuss the *secta potamonica* because, unlike Vossius, he was not concerned with creating a coherent overview of the historical development of ancient thought; or, more simply, because eclecticism was a philosophical movement that followed the birth of Christ and therefore was not covered by the period dealt with in *The History of Philosophy*. It could also be claimed that he did not think it necessary to cover eclectic ideas, which wished to leave the sects behind. He did not want to overstate the differences between the sects, and often preferred to see them as parallel developments of the practical and speculative models of a school's founder, as in the case of the sects that developed from Pythagoras' thought, or from Socrates (Plato, the 'minor' Socratics). There is certainly a difference between the position on virtue and happiness arrived at by the Stoics (who

concluded the tradition of Thales and Anaximander) and by Epicurus (who concluded the Pythagorean tradition), but both testified to the common destiny of human thought, which was called upon to create a rational code of conduct, avoiding pure theory (which Stanley implied could be represented by some aspects of Aristotle's philosophy) and a philosophy based on instinct that placed no rational strictures on action (here Stanley uses the Cyrenaics as his example).

Stanley's somewhat sketchy idea seems to be that the struggle between different philosophies did not lead to their demise, but instead a common ground developed. The historian needs to demonstrate the development of the different sects without attempting to choose between or reconcile their various doctrines. The philosophical position of eclecticism was completely foreign to Stanley's outlook; his stated purpose (in the introductory pages we have already considered) was to illustrate the practical and speculative positions, and infer their ethical implications. This aspect of Stanley's historiography was acceptable in the philological context in which he worked in England, but such an omission of eclecticism could not be allowed in Germany, where a very different historiographical tradition had developed, more interested in giving an overall meaning to philosophical events and in linking between philosophical and religious history. As a result, Olearius as a theologian and philologist thought it essential to analyse ancient Eclecticism, which gave a justification for the historical study of philosophy.

In truth, Olearius' history of eclectic philosophy is rather short and deficient. But the fact that he placed it at the end of *Historiae philosophiae* demonstrates the key position that it held for him in the history of classical thought; after nearly a century, eclecticism had become indispensable for religious study and theoretical speculation. Olearius, like Vossius before him, specified that the eclectic method chose all that was right and true from each philosophical sect and never swore by the affirmations of a single philosopher (*Historia*, Vol. III, p. 344). This method avoided the dangers of Scepticism, and indeed Potamon argued that the only way to overcome Scepticism was to carefully examine the philosophers' precepts, studying their fundamental ideas and principles, making their statements explicit, accepting only as probable all that was obscure or irreconcilable with other principles, and accepting as true only those positions that were clear and in agreement with each other (*Historia*, Vol. III, p. 346). The Neoplatonic and patristic thought that followed the classical philosophies accepted the eclectic method as it permitted them to overcome the divisions among the principal Greek sects. Moreover, some thinkers viewed eclecticism as the best way to reconcile the religious message (divinely revealed by Christianity or deduced from the mystical symbolism of Neoplatonism) with the human search for truth (*Historia*, Vol. III, pp. 348-57). Olearius attributed more importance to the latter argument: Eclecticism not only allowed the mixture

of different philosophies (he speaks of philosophers who were *miscelliones*, whom we would define as syncretists), but also permitted a perception of human thought as a collection of philosophies that, as partial moments in the search for truth, could be of great assistance to Christianity and the understanding of revealed truths. Olearius' idea that the eclectic use of the history of philosophy would lead to a better understanding of Christianity and the confutation of heresies (*Historia*, Vol. III, p. 360) was unrelated to the historical questions Stanley had posed himself, and opened the way to different use of philosophical historiography.

1.4.4. Stanley's declared intention of writing an objective history of the philosophers' lives and thought is reflected in his methodology and earns *The History of Philosophy* its position as the "monumentum" of the historiography of individuals, as Dal Pra (pp. 39-40) has described it. There is a fairly clear pattern to his treatment of each philosopher, which is substantially maintained throughout the work. He starts with the nation, family, and historical period of the philosopher in question, and then speaks of his education, teachers, and any travels that might have been carried out. He concludes with a description of his school and his teaching method and a list of his works and his pupils. The exposition of each philosopher's thought does however vary from chapter to chapter: in some cases, it is discussed along with the philosopher's life and school, usually between the description of the school and the description of his moral character; in other cases, when it is dealt with separately (after the biographical and bibliographical section), it is usually longer and more structured. Examples of the first method include the lives of Thales, Socrates, Diogenes of Sinope, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Democritus, and all the 'minor' thinkers, while separate sections exist for the philosophies of major thinkers, such as Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Pythagoras, the Sceptics, and Epicurus. In these separate sections, Stanley generally made ample use of a few sources, sometimes even summarizing them. For example, he expounded pseudo-Alcinous as a source of Plato's teaching, offered a compendium of Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* for the Sceptic doctrines, and summarized Gassendi's works and Lucretius' *De rerum natura* to explain Epicurus' thought. It would seem that Stanley quoted from the sources for consistency; it should not be seen as an expedient or a declaration of the historian's inadequacy, quite the contrary, it should be seen as proof of his own scientific conscientiousness and respect for his sources.

Stanley's insertion of passages from a philosopher's letters was to become typical of later histories of philosophy, and became popular because of the insights they give into the subject's character. On the other hand, he did not often directly quote a philosopher's thought, preferring to summarize the usual sources (Diogenes Laertius, Stobaeus, the *Suda*, Clement of

Alexandria, etc.). This approach also reflects Stanley's belief that the central role of a philosophy was the encapsulation of both theoretical and moral meditations, in particular the way the life reflected a coherent practical philosophy. Thus he included Socrates' letters from Leone Allacci's edition, without realizing their historical inconsistency (Olearius was to reproach him for this, following Bentley's work on Phalaris' letters, *Historia*, Vol. 1, p. 200); he also quotes letters of Xenophon (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 121-2), Aristippus (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 139-40), Plato (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 177-8; Olearius added four more by Plato, *Historia*, Vol. 1, pp. 334-6), Aristotle (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 243), Democritus, and Hippocrates (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 456-61).

Olearius often clarified and expanded on Stanley's exposition, inserting his own dissertations on particular points of doctrine. These dissertations were very much in the German academic tradition of *exercitationes* and *dissertationes*, and typical of Jakob Thomasius' approach to the history of philosophy. This was a far cry from the original context of the work, which Stanley had not written for a narrow didactic or academic purpose, but for a wider public that included men of letters and educated people in general. These dissertations go further than the illustration of general ethical and theoretical examples, and deal with specific philosophical and philological problems concerning authors or historical periods.

Stanley is by and large indifferent to the major speculative problems. He adapted his exposition to his source, and did not follow an overall speculative or historical interpretation. Thus he structured his illustration of Socrates' thought with sections on metaphysics, ethics (which is in turn divided into sections 'of Vertue and Vice', 'of Affections, Love, Envy, Grief', 'of Piety and Obedience', 'of Fortitude and Imbecillity', etc.), economics, and politics, without investigating the possibility that there might have been a system to Socrates' thought. In Plato's case, he is more concerned with the material on the philosopher than the dialogues, which are difficult to summarize. He did not deal in any depth with the key problems in the dialogues or with their chronological order, preferring instead to base himself on pseudo-Alcinous and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, as well as on other works that ignored the complexity of the dialogues, like Cicero's *Academicæ quaestiones* (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 161-2) and the 'distinctions' made by Diogenes Laertius (who in turn based his arguments on Aristotle: *The History of Philosophy*, pp. 163-6). His exposition of Epicurus' thought closely follows Gassendi's work, which referred back to Bk. 10 of Laertius' *De vita et moribus philosophorum*. Although Stanley did occasionally distance himself from the framework of the tripartition of philosophy and did insert passages and analyses from Laertius, he never put forward any alternative or dealt with such key questions as the relationship between Epicurus' thought and Democritus' atomism. All this demonstrates how Stanley's historical expo-

sition is never at variance with the available historical sources for the purpose of developing a framework for the history of philosophy and a truly critical interpretation.

Seen within the context of these limitations, it can be understood how Stanley's work must have been of considerable significance to his own time. He is balanced and dispassionate in his use of sources, and his presentation of historical accounts of biographies and doctrines is far from dull. He develops his own expository arrangement, which is simple and free from digressions. He does not give in to the temptation to pile up quotations and textual references, but sets them out in orderly and gradual fashion. Stanley demonstrates both confidence and prudence in his handling of philosophical works, their attributions, doctrines, and historical circumstances. He finds his way through difficult questions, and does not attempt to avoid problems posed by texts and sources, except those which concern wider historical implications. For instance, he approaches the question of the many thinkers under the name of Zoroaster with philological commitment and historical sensitivity, without seriously questioning the nature of Chaldean wisdom. Again, he makes considerable use of his learning and philological skills in his treatment of Pythagoras' life and the organization of his sect, but without confronting the overall problem of whether there existed a philosophy solely attributable to Pythagoras and a school which acted independently of its founder.

Another of Stanley's merits is that in most cases he did not use *placita* and aphorisms to illustrate a philosopher's thought. He does, at times, include some aphorisms, usually taken from Diogenes Laertius (in the case of Socrates, he takes them from Xenophon, Cicero, Plato, Plutarch, and Stobaeus), but as far as the major philosophers are concerned, he omits aphorisms in order to concentrate on a reasoned and more extensive argumentation. Quite often, he quotes directly from a philosopher's work, especially in the case of Aristotle and to some extent Epicurus. The result is a good balance between direct quotations and sources, with the latter being given the same weight as the former. A philosopher's own words are not sufficient to recreate his complete system, and in some cases not even a significant part. The bringing together of texts and sources can produce the detailed analysis that was Stanley's ideal. However he is not pedantic; indeed, he reflects the taste of a scholar who is first and foremost a writer and poet.

Moving on from the exposition of individual philosophers to the links between different philosophies, it becomes even clearer that Stanley perceived ancient philosophies as a succession of relationships between men rather than ideas. He put to one side the historical and philosophical problems concerning the continuity of sects, their historical order, and their disputes, in order to concentrate on the position of each philosopher within his own sect, whether that position was due to his own merits or to

favourable historical circumstances. Stanley uses teacher–student relationships and friendships between philosophers to explain doctrinal derivations, disagreements, and amendments to the systems used by the sects. The transmission of speculative positions was not therefore explained by Stanley in terms of logical development.

Stanley perceived this form of transmission from one generation to another as quite natural, because he was not concerned with concepts like ‘doctrinal development’, ‘philosophical progress’, or ‘philosophical decadence’. His perception of how philosophical doctrines are created was somewhat rudimentary. Changes in the level of civilization, social and political relations, customs, and personal relationships, clearly affect philosophical study and teaching. Philosophical development was therefore closely tied to the history of individuals, their intellectual preparation and moral and social sensibility. Doctrines differed according to this individual sensitivity. What was important to one philosopher might not be important to his disciple, because of his personality, historical circumstances, or the directions taken by his studies.

Stanley stressed the importance of intellectual choice because of the very nature of philosophy which was both practical and contemplative. Thus the philosopher, after having studied the philosophy of his teacher, teachers, or peoples with whom he has come into contact (in the case of Thales, Plato and Pythagoras) was to choose freely amongst various perspectives. Thus Anaximander chose ‘indeterminacy’ (*apeiron*) as the origin of all natural things in place of water as his teacher Thales had posited. Stanley did not give any explanation for this change, other than the position Anaximander freely decided to assume towards Thales (*The History of Philosophy*, pp. 60–61). There were many other examples among the philosophers of the Italic School: Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Democritus. Stanley claimed that Heraclitus was the first thinker to found a sect distinct from the Pythagorean School, but he never explained the relationship between his thought and that of the Pythagoreans. Equally he did not explain the transition from the Heraclitan sect to the Eleatic sect of Xenophanes and Parmenides — he may have felt that such an explanation was unnecessary because the arguments in favour of a Heraclitan influence on the Eleatics were limited to the fact that the Eleatics came later (this was a weak argument, and ignored the fact that the Heraclitan school had not even developed in Italy). Finally, Stanley accepted the idea that the Eleatic sect was made up of two distinct groups: one including Parmenides, Melissus, and Zeno, and the other of Leucippus, Democritus, Protagoras, and Anaxarchus. He had no arguments to back up such a statement, which included monists as well as pluralists and materialists like the atomists in the same sect. Stanley also made no attempt to find a common denominator to their doctrines, and his only argument (if there was one) was based on the tradition that claimed that Democritus’ teacher

Leucippus was born in Elea (*The History of Philosophy*, p. 452). Stanley actually accentuated the difference between Parmenides' monism and Democritus' atomism by attributing to the former the doctrine of Ideas found in Plato's dialogue that bears his name. He did not seem aware of this inconsistency, and a few pages after his chapter 'Of Ideas' he considered the atomistic doctrines without reference to any possible divergence between Democritus and his predecessors. It would appear that he looked at the development of philosophy in Italy in purely geographic terms.

Scepticism and Epicureanism were the last two sects in the Pythagorean line, although the link is extremely tenuous. Stanley did not attempt to derive Epicurus' position from Scepticism, nor indeed from Democritus' atomism. He wished to demonstrate the synthetic nature of Democritus' philosophy by attributing the influence on him to several teachers and tendencies, and to suggest that Epicurus' theoretical and practical outlook arose from his free choice. His aim was to avoid any reference to strict doctrinal dependence. Stanley treated the Sceptics in very much the same way, avoiding all reference to possible links with other schools or philosophers and concentrating on how their investigations centred around doubt and the search for inner tranquillity.

The influence on Platonic thought of Socrates would appear to be the exception. Stanley made it quite clear that Socrates was an essential influence in the development of the ethical, metaphysical, and idealistic elements of the Platonic system and was central to its articulation. However, on closer examination it is also clear that Stanley saw this influence purely in terms of a personal relationship between the two philosophers. Plato, too, based his philosophy on 'a way of life', which led him to accept Socrates' fundamental teachings as decisive in the attainment of happiness. Plato's important contribution was the systemization of Socrates' doctrines, although this certainly impoverished the ethical character of Socrates' message.

Personal factors were also used to explain the duration, success, and decadence of various sects. Like the transfer of philosophical ideas between one school and another, a sect's way of life depended on external factors such as a city's decadence, its geographical position, war, or on personal factors like a philosopher's powers of persuasion and charisma. The 'Socratic' schools in the narrow sense of the term all declined very rapidly when compared with the Platonic one, both because their doctrines lacked a solid foundation ("they were founded upon less reason"; *The History of Philosophy*, p. 133), and because they were located in places unsuitable for the growth of philosophical sects. The Cynics avoided this fate by transferring the centre of their activities to Athens (with Diogenes), and actually formed the basis for Stoicism, one of the mainstream philosophical movements.

1.5. Thomas Stanley's work is generally considered the first real history of philosophy, although this claim is somewhat arguable. It is certainly true that *The History of Philosophy* consciously attempted to create work that was different — thorough and objective — breaking substantially with Laertius' method of presenting successive philosophers and their sects. The title itself was an innovation, and his contemporaries were very much aware of this. His portrait by Peter Lely (1618–1680), which hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in London, carries the label: 'Thomas Stanley Armiger. Philosophiae Historiae Conditor'. On the other hand, the concept of an objective history of thought developed slowly throughout the seventeenth century, and is only partially achieved in Stanley's *History* which, as we have seen, tended to ignore the continuity in the development of philosophy. Yet its importance as the first serious attempt at a history of philosophy is undeniable (see, for example, the review of the second English edition in *Acta eruditorum*, suppl. II, 1696).

Because of the innovative nature of this work, it met with considerable success, especially after the second English edition was published. In 1702, a year after the third edition, there was published an anonymous anthology of the more significant writings on classical philosophy of ancient and modern historians, which was clearly influenced by *The History of Philosophy*. The work, entitled *The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers, containing an account of their several Sects, Doctrines, Actions, and Remarkable Sayings*, included passages from Diogenes Laertius, Casaubon, Ménage, Stanley, Gassendi and Charleton. Like Stanley, the anonymous anthologist believed that it was important to discuss the philosophers' lives and their political and moral commitment, as well as their philosophical systems. He stated: "This method, as I take it, is preferable to that of culling one General Systeme of philosophy out of all their writings, and so quoting them by scraps scattered here and there" (*The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, Preface, p. [2]). The strict connection between philosophical systems, conduct of life, civil activity, the echoes of teaching in the moral personality of the philosopher: all these must form the central subject of the history of philosophy.

The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers brought together the results of seventeenth-century scholarship on Oriental thought (Stanley), Greek thought (Stanley, Casaubon's comments on Diogenes Laertius, and Ménage), Greek thinkers in the Imperial Age (the editions of Eunapius of Sardis), and women who carried out philosophical activities (Ménage). The method closely followed Stanley's adaptation of Diogenes Laertius, but also took into account recent philological developments and the seventeenth-century Epicurean and Platonic 'renaissances'. The passages used in the anthology were wisely chosen, and the preface proposed extending Stanley's biographical and philological method to medieval and modern thinkers at

some later date (*The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, Preface, p. [8]). The anthologist defined this method as giving "an impartial account of what the Philosophers did and said, without pretending to censure errors, or to spend time in Panegyricks" (*The Lives of the Ancient Philosophers*, Preface, p. [4]). However, a history of philosophers who lived after the fall of the Roman Empire was never published; evidently there was not sufficient interest. *The History of Philosophy* was not imitated or followed up, probably because it was too well-liked as it stood for its clarity and thoroughness. It was popular in literary circles and with scholars and philosophers themselves, as can be seen from its reviews in contemporary publications, such as *Histoire des ouvrages des sçavans* and Le Clerc's review *Bibliothèque universelle et historique* (1687; he then expanded his positive evaluation in the Preface to *Philosophia orientalis*, 1690). Amongst those who were influenced by Stanley's work after 1687 and before its complete translation were Pierre Coste, whose 'Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne où l'on fait en abrégé l'histoire de cette science' is contained in Vol. 1 of P. S. Régis' *Cours entier de philosophie ou système général selon les principes de M. Descartes* (Amsterdam, 1691), and Bayle, who particularly welcomed Le Clerc's translation of the history of Oriental thought (see *Dictionnaire*, Vol. iv, pp. 555-60, s.v. 'Zoroastre').

The translations of *The History of Philosophy* brought the work to the height of its fame. While scholars like Olearius clearly identified its scientific and theoretical limitations and defined it as a miscellany of ancient philosophers and historians, they equally understood its importance. In his *Bibliotheca philosophica*, Struve described *The History of Philosophy* as extremely elegant, praised its thoroughness (Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 157), and claimed that Stanley had not only discussed the sects in detail, but also the philosophers' lives, their doctrines and historical circumstances. Like Le Clerc (BCh, xxiii (1711), pp. 222-30), he preferred the Latin edition to the English one because of Olearius' erudite additions. It was particularly felt that the translator, being a learned scholar of ancient philosophy, had been extremely diligent in explaining the ancient texts in his notes, while Stanley had been rather lax (*parum diligens*); for example, Stolle and Buddeus (*Isagoge historico-theologica ad theologiam universam singulasque eius partes*, 2nd edn, 1727-1730) equally appreciated the work's considerable literary and slightly lesser scholarly value.

Christoph August Heumann rejected the legitimate reservations of his fellow 'polyhistorians' about the value of the work's scholarship and historiographical theses and went to the other extreme, accusing Stanley of giving too scholarly an interpretation, which ignored philosophical inspiration. Defining a method of understanding *historia philosophica* 'philosophically', he strongly criticized *The History of Philosophy* as an example of a kind of historical scholarship that did not take into account the historical development of systems and sects. He denied that a truly great work could use

learned material without fully including the bases of systems and doctrines and the relationships between them (Heumann, Vol. 1, pp. 34-5). Stanley's historical studies were almost a wasted effort, because they had not been backed up by the investigation of the speculative questions underlying particular historical events affecting doctrinal developments. He wrote:

Although we do not want to detract from the praise that others have earned through their hard work, but wish freely to give credit where it is due, we are obliged to confess that even Stanley, who had brought together a considerable *corpus* of philosophical history, does not fully satisfy us, because he pays sufficient attention neither to historical truth nor to the bases of doctrines and events affecting them, but rather one might say that he has presented us with a table set out with all manner of dishes, and we are free to taste which is sweet or bitter and which is cold or hot (Heumann, Vol. 1, 'Vorbericht').²

Heumann's desire to introduce a new method into philosophical historiography led him to underestimate the importance of Stanley's *History*. By the mid century Brucker was expressing a very similar opinion, but his more detached assessment recognised the importance of the work at the time it was written. He considered Stanley to have collected together nearly all the elements necessary for a history of philosophy, and that Olearius had filled the remaining gaps. He also felt the work lacked a historical or philosophical interpretation; but if a comparative study of the material were to be carried out, then it could still be useful (Brucker, Vol. 1, 'Dissertatio praeliminaris', pp. 36-7).

Thus *The History of Philosophy* (and Olearius' Latin translation) were considered the founders of the genre, although their methodology was now out of date. Brucker's *Historia critica* did not consign the *History* to oblivion, but rather augmented interest in its literary and biographical qualities. Many scholars (e.g., Degérando, p. 141) took pleasure in reading the work, and found the historical data and biographies useful, since the references to the sources were backed up. While Brucker was widely respected for the solid framework and methodology he used, Stanley was considered useful and enjoyable. This was the position adopted by Appiano Buonafede (*Dell'indole*, Vol. 1, 'Prefazione', pp. xxxii-xxxiii), who believed Stanley had surpassed all preceding historiography with his "incredible wealth of learning and complex research", and put him on a par with Brucker.

In the *Einleitung in die Geschichte der Philosophie*, Hegel rejected the idea

² "Denn ob wir gleich andere ihres Lobes, so sie durch ihre Arbeit verdienet haben, nicht berauben wollen, sondern *suum cuique* von Herzen gerne gönnen, so müssen wir doch gestehen, daß auch *Stanleyus* nicht einmal, der doch das größte *corpus historiae philosophicae* verfertigt, uns erwünschte Genüge thut, indem er weder gehöriger Sorgfalt untersucht, sondern uns gleichsam einen mit allerhand Gerichten besetzten Tisch vorgestellet, und uns frey gelassen zu versuchen, was süße oder sauer, warm oder kalt sey."

that *The History of Philosophy* was particularly erudite, and held it responsible for popularizing both the concept that the history of philosophy was a succession of opinions and the belief that pagan thought was destined to be surmounted by Christian truth (G. W. F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Eng. trans. by T. M. Knox and A. V. Miller, (Oxford, 1985), p.185). Nevertheless, he did make use of the biographies and the wealth of information that could be gleaned from *The History*. Stanley was to be appreciated for the care he took in his study of ancient philosophers and the variety of their speculative expressions. Hegel could not agree with the limitations he placed on classical thought, but he felt that he understood Stanley's position to be the same as Gianfrancesco Pico's: namely that historical analysis of Christian thought, whether medieval or Renaissance, was impossible, given that their underlying truth was without history, while on the other hand the vain attempts of pagan philosophers did have a historical dimension.

According to Hegel, Stanley believed that the vitality of ancient philosophy was due to the fragmentary and elusive nature of the sects, so he did not think the most suitable way to illustrate them was by following the line of philosophical derivation. Banfi shared this view in his brief history of the historiography of philosophy, but expanded on Hegel's interpretation, claiming that Stanley was using a sceptical interpretation of ancient philosophy to endorse religious dogma (p. 11). There is nothing in *The History of Philosophy* that justifies such an interpretation: there is a considerable difference between Scepticism and the historical study of the varied sects. Stanley's exposition has a certain pungency, but is not based on any religious or philosophical thesis. Indeed, this characteristic ensured its continuing success, and even Hegel had occasion to put it to good use. This is indeed remarkable.

Stanley's work was denied any validity for Cousin and his followers because, by their standards of Eclecticism, it was indifferent to the great variety of the sects and exaggerated the sceptical and fragmentary nature of philosophy. In his *Dictionnaire*, Adolphe Franck flatly claimed that the work was totally useless, because it treated philosophers and their sects individually. This type of assessment of the history of ancient thought destroyed any literary value the work might have had (Franck, pp. 1660-61). Other nineteenth-century critics did not share his interpretation, because they tended to place the work in its historical context and valued it for what it was, the first example of a historical study of ancient thought. Nineteenth-century bibliographical reference works, right up to the most important for the history of philosophy (Baldwin, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (New York, 1905), Vol. III, pp. 8-14), all started their lists of general works on the history of philosophy with Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, testimony to its position as founder of the genre.

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CHAPTER 2

THE 'HISTORIA PHILOSOPHICA' IN THE CULTURE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

The *historia philosophica* first appeared as a literary genre in the Low Countries between 1540 and the end of the sixteenth century. Developments in historical, philological, and biblical studies in the universities, especially at Leiden, brought about an increased interest in the historical aspects of philosophy amongst scholars of both history and the humanities. Research into aspects of ancient thought (Lipsius) and Oriental philosophy (Heurnius) were decisive in focusing attention on history as an introduction to the more important representatives of classical thought. This new literary genre would not have been required, if it had not been for the considerable increase in classical studies, biblical exegesis, and above all philological research. Indeed, it was the technique of philology that created the way of examining all the works, authors, and main currents of thought that defined the historical and literary framework of the disciplines to be studied. For example, Heinsius with his poetic compositions on classical philosophy written in Greek verse, Vossius with his review of the history of historiography (*De historicis graecis* and *De historicis latinis*), and Grotius with his review of historical texts (*Philosophorum sententiae de fato et de eo quod in nostra est potestate* (Amsterdam, 1648)) all contributed to the application of philology to philosophical texts and sects, which sorted out their chronological order and doctrinal sources.

The philological nature of these histories of philosophy should not lead us to overlook the considerable influence that Bacon's concept of *historia literaria* had on the early development of this genre in the Low Countries. Bacon did not have the same influence on Dutch culture that he had on the English, but it is undeniable that his encyclopaedism stimulated the Dutch philologists to categorize knowledge by its historical development. Vossius'

concept of polymathy, in typically Baconian fashion, placed great importance on historical method, and understood the history of philosophical sects to be a fundamental element of philosophy. In the Preface to his *Historia philosophica*, Hornius followed Bacon in arguing that the history of philosophy could play a decisive role in clarifying philosophical research in a decisive way. Abraham de Graaf saw the interdependency between the *philosophi veteres* and *novi* as a need for new doctrines and scientific discoveries to refer back to classical philosophies, which were valued not so much as authorities as for their methodological and speculative theses.

In the Low Countries, the influence of Bacon's idea of *historia litteraria* together with the development of studies into the history of philosophy warded off the anti-historical offensive carried out by natural and rationalist philosophers. Galileo's famous lines in the *Dialogo dei massimi sistemi* showed his contempt for "historians or scholars of memory", who were unable to understand that true science is a product of experience and reason, and not the continuous referral to texts and quotations (G. Galilei, *Opere*, ed. F. Flora (Milan and Naples, 1953), p. 472). Equally well-known is Descartes' view that contrasted history to science and extolled the latter for its rejection of tradition (cf. *Regulae ad directionem ingenii*, rule 3, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, ed. C. Adam et P. Tannery, Vol. x (n. edn; Paris, 1966), p. 367). The polemical positions of scientists and rationalist thinkers (to whom Malebranche was later to add his voice about 1675–80 in *Recherche de la Vérité*) tended to move away from historical research and replace it with rational and experimental methodologies; but in the Low Countries the anti-historical slant was lost, and a keen desire to bring together the differing traditions of rationalism and Aristotelian Scholasticism developed in a 'concordist' way and took advantage of historical inquiry by relating it more closely to the formation of the philosopher-scientist.

Even if they did not consider history to be the main element in the conquest of nature, Dutch Cartesians and intellectuals who were open to new ideas did accept that history had an important scientific role in the preparation for philosophical inquiry. In this period, philosophical historiography is not, therefore, the product of philology based on the purely Renaissance model and oblivious to the work of the *novatores*. It linked the study of letters, which was seen as preparatory, to the more advanced fields of mathematics, natural philosophy, theology, and medicine. Historians were therefore seen not so much as collecting sterile records of the past as supplying the scientist, philosopher, and theologian with material useful in the preparation of their proofs and arguments. There was no divorce between historical and philological research and scientific endeavour (as Braun claims, pp. 64–5): the two areas of study developed along parallel lines and often in conjunction with each other. This can be demonstrated by Vossius, for example, who wrote works on both mathematics and philosophy, and

de Grau, whose *Historia philosophica* was conceived while he held the chair of mathematics at the University of Franeker.

Although the *historia philosophica* was created by philologists, it satisfied requirements that came from outside philological circles. It did not set out to give definitive answers to problems posed by the analysis of classical texts, and as far as the organization of university courses was concerned, it was seen as a propaedeutic to philosophical study. Indeed, all literary disciplines were considered as preparation for the traditional courses in the faculties of medicine, law, and theology — a great deal of importance was attached to this in the Low Countries. In the arts faculties, one subject would prepare for the next: literary disciplines prepared for philosophical studies, and these, in turn, prepared for the study of other disciplines, such as mathematics, natural philosophy, and medicine (Vossius' collection of works, *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione*, is a clear example of this). As Dibon has shown in his careful research into the pre-Cartesian period, philosophy was the culmination of all the subjects taught in the arts faculties, and thus found itself in a relatively autonomous position as far as both teaching and research were concerned. For this reason the history of philosophy profited both from the assistance of philology and its relationship with philosophical disciplines, requiring the input of other subjects and methodologies.

The stages by which histories of philosophy developed and consolidated their achievements demonstrate the function of the new genre. In fact, we owe the first academic examination of the development of philosophical traditions to a professor of philosophy at the University of Leiden, Adriaan Heereboord. He confirmed the trend towards a propaedeutical study of the history of philosophy in his very important collection of academic disputations, the *Meletemata philosophica*, which appeared in 1654. The philological nature of the new *historia* is demonstrated by the fact that the first wide-ranging, if somewhat scholastic, studies that appeared in the Low Countries are the works of a philologist, Johannes Gerardus Vossius, and a historian, Georgius Hornius. Both studies were written within a few years of each other. Vossius wrote *De philosophorum sectis* a few years before his death, presumably between 1645 and 1649; it was based on lecture notes that went back to 1632 (see below). Hornius wrote an outline of a *Historia philosophica* in 1640, when he was only 20, and took it up again some ten to fifteen years later, without ever finishing it. Significantly, the dates of publication were also very close: Hornius' *Historia* first appeared in 1655, and *De philosophorum sectis* in 1658. If we also take into account that the first edition of Heereboord's *Meletemata* was published in 1654 and the second in 1659, we can only conclude that, within the space of very few years, Dutch scholarship had clearly demonstrated its need for the new genre.

After its sudden growth, however, the new genre did not develop and spread as quickly as might have been expected, probably because these studies

and summaries aimed at a scholastic audience, which did not encourage a more wide-ranging historical and philological approach. Vossius' work achieved a considerably wide circulation, becoming in effect a basic text book on the history of philosophy. The Dutch philologists' interest in the history of major philosophical trends was to be taken up by German schools and universities, especially in the works of Jakob Thomasius. In the Low Countries themselves, historical-philosophical interests became more specialized, a tendency which both Le Clerc and Bayle regretted, believing that it demonstrated a lack of cultural progress. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the philologist Jakob Voerbroeck (latinized Perizonius, 1651–1715) wrote *Origines babylonicae et aegyptiacae* (Leiden, 1711), which was important for its treatment of ancient Chaldean and Egyptian thought. The theologian Abraham Heidan (1597–1678) made considerable use of the history of philosophy for his *De origine erroris* (Amsterdam, 1678).

The one exception to this tendency in the last years of the seventeenth century is to be found in Abraham de Grau's studies and syntheses, which appeared nearly twenty years after Hornius' *Historia*. He applied the lessons learnt by the philologists to specifically philosophical purposes. For the first time in the development of the *historia philosophica*, historical research was used for genuine theoretical instruction, as well as giving more general philosophical information. In this case, de Grau interpreted the problems raised by classical philosophy with reference to the new Cartesian doctrines.

The literary genre of the *historia philosophica* developed in the Dutch universities with fairly specific characteristics. The genre gave priority to the study of philosophical developments in the widest sense, and above all attempted a precise and thorough presentation of all philosophical material transmitted from antiquity. Although the material was organized within a chronological framework, chronological developments were rarely treated as the determining factor in the study of philosophy. The periodization in these works is schematic and is modelled on the periods designed by Diogenes Laertius for classical thought, or on that of patristic universal historiography, which the Reformation had brought back into favour (as, for example, in Georg Hornius' *Historia philosophica*), or indeed on a mixture of both. These works adopt a new and distinctive approach to philosophical doctrines. Comment is replaced by investigation into concrete events affecting philosophers, their doctrines and their schools.

The distinguishing feature of the *historia philosophica* is therefore neither a sense of history nor the concept of philosophical progress (phenomena that had not yet appeared), but rather the concept of philological criticism applied to philosophy. The primary object of investigation is the text with its distinctive features and the imprint of the author's character. They examined either the philosopher's text or the account of a classical historian, which the

Dutch historians considered equally important. For these philologists and philosophers, writing a *historia philosophica* involved the full investigation of all aspects of philosophical activity and their insertion within a philological, historical, and chronological framework.

The historians and philologists of the Dutch universities broke with the classical view, no longer accepting purely biographical and doxographical methods, but were unable to free themselves from the ancient concept of philosophical succession. While they no longer perceived successive philosophies as a series of personal legacies, they were unable to put forward an explanation of the chronological development of the various philosophies, sects, and schools, and ended up justifying the concept of philosophical development within the confines of separate schools.

Scholars have attributed the burgeoning of *historiae philosophicae* in the Low Countries to both religious and socio-economic factors. There has been a tendency to interpret the new genre as a product of the growing cultural awareness of the middle classes, who believed in knowledge free from dogma, and had faith in the progress of their institutions and of human consciousness. This opinion is shared by Rak (pp. 66-9, 104, 107-8), Del Torre (pp. 25-9, 34, 41) and to some extent Braun (pp. 65, 67: however, he also implies that, although the Dutch *historia* appears to be new in that it is a product of progressive social forces, it cannot be defined as a new literary genre). The theory of the bourgeois origins of Dutch philosophical historiography would appear, however, to be rather rash. In reality, the *historia philosophica* sprang from the nature of the Dutch university milieu, and principally reflects the advances made in the field of philology. It cannot be directly linked to the ideology of the dominant social class, because it does not represent a definitive formulation directed towards political ends and cultural reforms. Even if its methods and procedures were supported by the liberal climate prevailing in the cities, it was not attempting to win the approval of the middle class; but, as Dibon has shown, was following the general direction of European philology.

Indeed, in structure the new literary genre was conservative — it appealed to the past in its concern to avoid hasty theoretical conclusions and encouraged philosophical circles to adopt a more prudent attitude towards the ranks of the *novatores*. De Grau, the last of the seventeenth-century Dutch philosophical historians, is a good example of this. Because of its role in the initial formation of philosophy, philosophical historiography tends to consolidate the philosopher's ties to the past and with the classical tradition. Methods of textual criticism are not sufficient to modify this situation. The historical-philological approach, in itself a means for increasing the awareness of philosophy and avoiding mere repetition of facts and doctrines, proved capable of bringing human thought of the past back to life, through its application to the *historia philosophica*. It was a useful instrument by which

to view a vast range of material which included innovative as well as conservative and dogmatic philosophy, Oriental and barbarian 'wisdom' as well as Greek thought, and mythology as well as rational doctrines.

With the aid of scholarship, the *historiae philosophicae* were open to all possible forms of wisdom, or, at the very least, they related philosophy in the more limited and technical sense of the word to this wider range of forms. They accepted and catalogued every expression of human thought and related it to more rational formulations. The philosophical historian rejected the role of censor, which would have deprived him of so many reference points. By analysing this vast material, the historian related philosophy proper to all other expressions of human thought, but without ranking them in order of importance. Thus chronology became the only discriminating factor between the various disciplines.

In any case, the philosophers and philologists were mainly interested in classical thought. Only Hornius expressly considered all philosophies and all beliefs. However, this emphasis on Greek thought does not mean that the ancient thought of non-Greeks was ignored, and, above all, it does not mean that they ignored the non-rational and religious elements of the great philosophers' doctrines. As a result, philosophers like Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, and others whose thought was mainly concerned with religion, mysticism, and esoteric teachings were studied with reference to Oriental influences, thus freeing these doctrines from their aura of mystery and showing them to be, from a historical point of view, manifestations of speculative thought couched in non-rational terms.

The Dutch historians were therefore ready to perceive ancient Oriental thought as a non-rational and unrigorous expression of theological, metaphysical, scientific and moral doctrines. Unlike the Renaissance Neoplatonists, the authors of *historiae philosophicae* attempted a secular interpretation of Oriental doctrines that stripped them of their mystical and esoteric associations but not of their value as evidence of philosophical development. Hornius in his treatment of Oriental wisdom, and both Vossius and de Grau in their reflections on the *sapientia veterum*, fully accepted the philosophical nature of ancient Oriental doctrines, and they had absolutely no 'libertine' intention of belittling ancient history and wisdom in terms of ignorance and brutality. The Dutch historians directed their studies towards a cautious recognition of the reliability of the texts and the accounts of Oriental wisdom, while being very careful not to overestimate their importance or ascribe to them some esoteric value.

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On 'Cartesian scholasticism', the influence of Bacon, and the teaching of philosophy in the Dutch universities:

J. Bohatec, *Die cartesianische Scholastik in der Philosophie und reformierten Dogmatik des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1912); Sortais, I, pp. 517–20; C. L. Thijssen-Schoute, *Les cartésianisme aux Pays-Bas*, in *Descartes et le cartésianisme hollandais* (Amsterdam and Paris, 1950), pp. 183–260; P. Dibon; C. L. Thijssen-Schoute, *Nederlands Cartesianisme* (Amsterdam, 1954); W. Weier, 'Cartesianischer Aristotelismus in siebzehnten Jahrhundert', *Salzburger Jahrbuch für Philosophie*, XIV (1970), pp. 35–65; G. B. Gori, *La fondazione dell'esperienza in 's Gravesande* (Florence, 1972) pp. 6–20; T. Verbeek, 'Ens per accidens: Le origini della querelle d'Utrecht,' *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, ser. 6, XII (1992) pp. 276–88; id., *Descartes and the Dutch: Early reactions to Cartesian philosophy* (Carbondale, Ill., 1992); id., 'Tradition and Novelty: Descartes and some Cartesians', in *The Rise of Modern Philosophy*, ed. T. Sorell (Oxford, 1993), pp. 167–96.

On early philosophical historiography:

Braun, pp. 64–8; Malusa, 'Origini', pp. 23–4; Gueroult, Vol. 1, pp. xx–xxx.

1. ADRIAAN HEEREBOORD (1614–1659) *Meletemata philosophica*

1.1. Adriaan Heereboord (or Heereboort) was born in Leiden in 1614. He studied philosophy at the University of Leiden under Frans Burgersdijk, and taught philosophy at the same university from 1643 until his death. He was also director of the theological college. As a teacher of philosophy and theology, he taught a somewhat eclectic Aristotelianism which was open to the influence of Descartes. Along with De Raey, Heidan, and Wittichius, he was one of the initiators of what came to be called 'Cartesian scholasticism'.

He died in Leiden on 25 December 1659 (although some biographers like Paquot claim that he died in 1660).

1.2. Nearly all Heereboord's writings are the product of his academic activity: speeches, opening lectures, exercises, and disputations. His collections of speeches, lectures, and treatises merit careful consideration: *Philosophia naturalis, moralis et rationalis* (Leiden, 1654; reprinted in 1660 and 1664); *Ἑρμηνεία logica, seu Explicatio Synopseos logicae Bundersdicianae* (Leiden, 1657; London, 1658; many other editions); *Meletemata philosophica* (Leiden, 1654; 2nd enlarged edn, 5 vols. in 1, 1659; Nijmegen, 1664 and 1665). As the title implies, the latter work was a collection of disputations and philosophical exercises, divided into the major philosophical disciplines and mainly arranged for didactic purposes. It contains two dissertations on the history of philosophy: one inserted within the 'Epistola' addressed to the *curatores* of Leiden University, entitled 'De varia, vario tempore et variis usitata, ac vera tandem Philosophandi ratione', and a 'Disputatio philosophica de origine et progressu philosophiae', placed as an appendix to the *disputationes* in Vol. II (which continues the page numbering in Vol. I).

1.3. It is not essential to define Heereboord's Cartesianism to understand his ideas about the history of philosophy. Indeed, the most noticeable feature of his philosophical and theological activity was his desire to reconcile Descartes with the Aristotelian tradition, and his belief in the continuity between Aristotelianism and the new speculative currents (thus he devoted the same attention to Gassendi as he does to Descartes).

He defines philosophy in the Aristotelian sense as an investigative activity that ended in contemplation. It consists of "true and well-founded knowledge" about all that can be enlightened by intellect ('De origine et progressu', in *Meletemata* (1659), p. 378). Philosophical activity continues through time without pause or obscurement, and is subject to growth given that humanity refines its theoretical abilities in the pursuit of its own happiness. Historically, Aristotle supplied the rational methodology, which had been instrumental for the expansion of philosophical inquiry, to all spheres of human knowledge. He considers Aristotle's main achievement to have been the foundation of a method for understanding nature. Aristotelian philosophy moved between the twin poles of nature and thought: the knowledge of the first guaranteed the attainment of happiness which derives from the thorough investigation of reality by the latter. The progress of natural science only confirms the primacy of thought. Throughout the disputations in the *Meletemata*, Heereboord argues that it was not surprising that philosophical investigations became increasingly refined over the centuries within a rational and systematic framework that was immutable, since the nature of man as a thinking being was unchanging. Descartes's philosophy, therefore, represented the most recent manifestation of this progress of natural science, arising from the analytical and synthetic potential of human thought.

The main purpose of Heereboord's university teaching was to utilize the Aristotelian framework for the physical and metaphysical questions raised by

Descartes. Consequently, he often felt the need to support his presentation of new philosophical ideas with the history of philosophy, in order to explain a great philosophical doctrine of the past, namely the Aristotelian doctrine, and to clarify the purpose of studying nature. In his advice to students ('Consilium de ratione studendi philosophiae', in the introduction to the *Meletemata*, p. 27), Heereboord distinguished between *vetus* and *nova* philosophy, explaining that Aristotle had systematized *vetus* philosophy, which had appeared in ancient times, making its survival possible into present times. *Philosophia vetus* and *philosophia aristotelica* therefore became identical. *Nova* philosophy he described as the product of the most recent philosophical ideas (clearly a reference to Descartes), which did not base itself on any human authority but addressed itself directly to the study of nature. It is clear, according to this view, that any history of philosophy, however schematic, must deal with the *philosophia vetus*, which constituted an introduction to the proper understanding of Aristotelian thought. Thus, after the history course, students were taught to organize the ancient material within an Aristotelian framework.

The study of philosophy passed through three different stages which corresponded to three types of interpretation of Aristotle from antiquity to the seventeenth century: the systematic stage, which was highly valued by the *systematici*; the disputation stage, claimed by the *quaestionarii*; and the comment stage, whose representatives came from the wide ranks of the exegetes (or *textuales*). All reference to the history of philosophy was subordinated to theoretical study, but it is significant that the order in which Aristotelian philosophy was investigated reflected exactly the various attitudes that developed around Aristotle's review of ancient philosophy of different periods of history. For Heereboord, it was necessary to refer to the actual historical development of philosophy when establishing the order in which Aristotelian thought was to be studied.

It is evident that Heereboord intended to use the history of philosophy as a cultural heritage, which could help develop his arguments in disputation. If we look at the disputations in the *Meletemata*, we discover that there are continual historical references, but they never dominate the argumentation to the point where they actually take over or lead into historical digressions. Heereboord does not introduce the history of philosophy into the disputations, as he considered this to be already understood. He thought that it was up to whoever taught the preliminary course, rather than the philosopher, to introduce the students to the history of philosophy — their basic instrument of study. Consequently, philologists were expected to teach the history of philosophy, as well as to study it and carry out original research (and this system was put into practice at Leiden University).

Adriaan Heereboord, as professor of theology and philosophy, gave only limited attention to the history of philosophy. However, he was convinced it

had a role to play, and in fact ended the first part of his *disputationes* with a historical disputation, in which he reviewed the speculative arguments that he had brought into play within the disputations in the light of historical events. Following the greater awareness of classical historiography that had occurred during the Renaissance, it had become a practice in the European universities to include the argument *de ortu et progressu philosophiae* in disputations. Heereboord's methodological viewpoint simply confirms the presence of the historiographical perspective. The very fact that his inaugural address at Leiden, given on 9 February 1641, was entitled 'De varia, vario tempore, et variis usitata, ac vera tandem Philosophandi ratione', is proof that he saw the need to link up with the work of philologists. Equally the presence at that address of the University Rector, the medical doctor Otto Heurnius, who was the author of a study of Oriental philosophy, further increases the impression that the study of the *philosophia vetus* had forged a link between the preliminary study of philology and the systematic study of the philosophical disciplines.

1.4. *Meletemata philosophica*

1.4.1. The dissertation 'De varia, vario tempore, et variis usitata, ac vera tandem Philosophandi ratione' takes up pp. 1–6 of the 'Epistola ad curatores' that is to be found in the general introduction to the *disputationes* in Vol. 1 of the *Meletemata*. This *epistola* contains Heereboord's declaration of his 'reformed' Aristotelian position and his support for the new Cartesian philosophy, and in part constitutes a declaration of intent. These positions are backed up by other brief introductory dissertations: 'De notitia Dei naturali' (followed by a comment on a statement by St Justin Martyr), 'Consilium de ratione studendi philosophiae', in which he confirms the historical framework already put forward (pp. 27–8), and 'Sermo academicus de recta philosophice disputandi ratione', which he gave at Leiden on 13 January 1648 (pp. 29–38, still in the introductory part, which has its own page numbering).

On the other hand, the *disputatio* 'De origine et progressu philosophiae' is to be found in the 'Appendix quarundam Disputationum' in the 1659 edition, which we have been following. This appendix is placed at the end of the first series of fifty dissertations, and contains dissertations on various subjects — for instance, on atoms, the relationship between philosophy and theology, and the number of elements in nature. The last disputation, 'De origine et progressu philosophiae' (pp. 378–82), is the only one of a general historical nature (for example, the disputation 'De atomis' is purely an analysis of Magnen's *Democritus reviviscens*). In some ways the disputation develops the arguments on pp. 1–2 of the dissertation in the introduction — to the point of using the same expressions — and reiterates a review of ancient thought up to Aristotle.

It is interesting to note that Descartes's name is mentioned in neither of these writings, nor indeed in any of the disputations contained in the *Meletemata*. This was because in 1647 the *Curatores* of Leiden University had banned the teaching of Cartesian doctrines and their discussion in disputations. Heereboord submitted to the decree, but in the final pages of the 'Epistola' (i.e., the dedication), he discussed the French philo-

sopher's doctrines at length. Furthermore he protested that the University, while prohibiting any support for Cartesianism, was promoting the attacks that theologians were making against Descartes ('Epistola ad Curatores', *Meletemata*, pp. 12-20).

1.4.2. The periodization of Heereboord's historical-philosophical works is extremely interesting. He begins with Adam, the first man and, therefore, the first to acquire knowledge. He moves on to Noah, whose wisdom was to spread amongst various peoples. The most authentic form of philosophy was to be found amongst the Jews, and it subsequently became the basis for Chaldean, Phoenician, and Egyptian philosophy. Philosophy then spread from these peoples to the Ethiopians, the Indians, the Persians, and even the Celts. The Greeks assimilated the philosophical doctrines of these people of the East and especially Jewish doctrines, but there were also powerful Chaldean, Phoenician and Egyptian influences, which then were translated into a myriad of sects.

Heereboord accepted the traditional classification of Italic and Ionic sects, but in agreement with Clement of Alexandria he added the Eleatic school, alongside the other two categories. He considered the philosophy of Empedocles and the theorists of the atom to be derived from the Eleatic philosophers. On the one hand, he argued that the Eleatic school was culturally and ethnically close to the Italic tradition; while on the other hand, he followed the Aristotelian interpretation and emphasized the doctrinal differences between Parmenides and his followers and Pythagorean philosophy.

He makes the teachings of Anaxagoras and the tradition of the Ionic school the starting point for Socrates' philosophy, whose innovation was to broaden investigation to include ethics. Many sects derived their ideas from Socrates, but only the Academics, Cynics, and Peripatetics were Socratic in the strict sense of the term. Aristotle's philosophy was the high point of classical thought, because of its clarity and solid foundations — philosophy could not substantially advance from his positions, but could only refine the understanding of problems that he had posed and had begun to resolve. Heereboord suggests that the history of Aristotelian thought might be the subject for a future disputation: this would begin with the Greek commentators and move on to discuss the Arab and Latin authors and in particular "the monks and coenobites, the Thomists, the Scotists, the nominalists, the realists" ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', *Meletemata*, p. 382). This idea was only partially accomplished in his inaugural address, 'De varia, vario tempore, et variis usitata, ac vera tandem Philosophandi ratione', in which he discusses the history of Aristotelianism after a brief introduction to the history of classical thought.

For Heereboord, the Aristotelian school was the most central philosophical tradition to develop between antiquity and the Middle Ages. Theophrastus and Strato continued to investigate nature, but after them came the

era of mere textual analysis of Aristotle's work. Classical research that attempted to remain true to the text culminated in the interpretative work of Alexander of Aphrodisias. He was then followed by many commentators (Themistius, Porphyry, Philoponus, Simplicius), whose achievements Heereboord judged to be negligible. The political and cultural crisis of the Greek world following the expansion of Byzantine power witnessed an interruption in the study of Aristotle (with the exception of St John Damascenus). The Arabs were brought into contact with the works of Aristotle through their incursions and invasions, and this encouraged them to investigate nature as he had instructed. However, Arab philosophy also ended up giving greater importance to textual commentary than to the study of nature, and Averroës blocked all further philosophical progress. When Aristotle's works and the commentaries on them were eventually made known to the Catholic West following the long period of inactivity imposed by the barbarian invasions, the supremacy of Averroës extended this stagnation to Western culture and confused philosophy with theology. Thus Scholasticism was born in the theology of Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus and the logical subtleties of Duns Scotus, Occam, and Biel.

Dante Alighieri and Francesco Petrarch freed philosophy from the 'dense shadows' of Scholasticism, redirecting it towards the study of things — the ladder that led to knowledge of God. Byzantine scholars also played their part by helping to spread knowledge of Greek philosophy. This renewed philosophy culminated in the triad of Erasmus, Luther, and Melanchthon, who were attempting to reform philosophy and religion in order to break the domination of Scholasticism and the papacy. Catholic forces managed, however, to counter the Reform movement, and reappropriated the Aristotelian tradition. There were sudden increases in the number of *summae* and comments in defence of the supremacy of Scholastic methodology (at the universities of Coimbra, Alcalá de Henares, and Louvain, as well as in the works of Suárez, Pereyra, etc.). Thus the schoolmen "were made captives of the Pope and Aristotle". Heereboord concludes that Protestant thinkers had chosen a very different line and rediscovered the real Aristotle, the source of both true natural investigation and authentic religion founded on the proper use of reason.

1.4.3. Heereboord uses these two historical outlines to defend his theory that Aristotelianism was quite capable of assimilating Descartes's ideas. Given that he perceives philosophy as the knowledge of nature, Heereboord rejects the idea that philosophy was concerned with the divine ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', *Meletemata*, p. 378). Equally he attributes great importance to the earliest periods of man's history. According to his view, the first man received wisdom from God, but after the original sin it was the desire for knowledge, not divine revelation, that he passed on to his descend-

ants. Before the Flood, philosophy was cultivated by men using whatever remained of the original wisdom ("the few little glimmers remaining"). Heereboord considers Seth, Lamech, and Noah to be philosophers who had inherited Adam's wisdom and studied nature through reason without recourse to occult practices ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 378).

There is no truth, he believes, in the idea that wisdom was developed by mythical characters like Osiris, Nile, Pluto, Jupiter, Pan, Apollo, etc. The learned pagans invented these characters in order to attribute mysterious causes to the origin of all things. According to Heereboord, serious historical study showed that Noah had consolidated natural wisdom, which was spread amongst various peoples by his descendants. Initially, it established itself amongst the Jews, whose philosophy was "sacred, true, and undefiled". This demonstrated that the most valid current of natural philosophy to develop after the Flood was the study of nature, which by itself led towards divine knowledge. The divine assistance afforded Noah and the Jews did not imply intellectual passivity; all study required continuous industry. Under Abraham, the Jews taught the study of nature to the Chaldeans and Phoenicians, who in turn taught it to the Egyptians ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 378).

According to Heereboord's rapid survey, the history of Oriental and barbarian thought could be considered theology only in the sense that it approached God through use of reason. Chaldean and Indian philosophy and that of the Persian magi were examples of painstaking investigation into divine and human matters. Small wonder, then, that Greek thought assimilated the wisdom of these and other Eastern peoples, and that the Greeks adopted the rational method: "nevertheless all [the wisdom] of the Greeks had been drawn and derived from the wisdom of the Chaldaeans, Phoenicians, and Egyptians; for anything that those possessed, they sought from the schools of the Hebrews" ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 378). Berossus, a Babylonian, taught astrological predictions to the Athenians, while merchants, warriors, and travellers brought Phoenician doctrines and Egyptian arts and sciences to Greece. The many Greek colonies dotted around the Mediterranean further aided the spread of Oriental philosophy within the Greek area of influence. Heereboord claims to have thus proven that there was continuity in ancient thought, a premise required for his thesis that continuity also existed between ancient and modern philosophy.

Heereboord clearly defines the relationship between philosophy and wisdom (*sapientia*): Pythagoras replaced the term *sapientia* with the word *philosophia*, which more closely reflected the human element in the study of nature in its totality. Both terms refer to the same reality, to knowledge based on the ultimate nature of things; and even in the case of the Pythagorean school they do not refer to knowledge of mysterious revelations, possessed only by the initiated ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 380).

This view allows Heereboord to link together the philosophies of Oriental peoples, each with their own particular features, and Greek thought, which was divided into sects. Greek philosophies all had the same structure of rational study, and thus it is possible to argue that Aristotle's philosophy interpreted the requirements of all the sects.

The fragmentation of Greek thought, according to this view, was above all due to the nature of the Greek soul, whose ambition it had been to document its own beliefs and belittle those of others ("For ambition had driven such deep roots into their hearts that the worst ones tried to rob the monuments of the ancestors and to destroy them completely, so that they might more easily propagate to posterity the fame of their own names, after the memory of the ancestors had been destroyed"; 'De origine et progressu philosophiae', pp. 379–80). This desire for cultural autonomy led the Greeks to deny the Oriental source of their theories, and to invent fables and myths to explain the supposed indigenous origins of their philosophies ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', pp. 380–81). Heereboord considers the development of Greek thought as more problematic than the simple succession of struggles between sects. For example, he sees in the Ionic school the development of pure natural philosophy (originated by Thales) into the ethical and dialectical inquiry advocated by Socrates ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 381). Given that practical rather than theoretical reasons accounted for the diversity of the sects, it is possible to argue that there existed a relative unity in the development of their thought, which was to be found in some of their fundamental attitudes.

Because of this underlying unity, Aristotle was able to put an end to sectarianism. His philosophy became the arbiter between the sects and endeavoured to understand, correct, and bring together the various philosophical positions. In Heereboord's opinion, the primacy of Aristotelian thought was due to its ability to analyse natural and human reality with the assistance of "an acumen of incomparable genius", and Aristotle became the most successful interpreter of philosophical continuity ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 382). Heereboord explains the continued relevance, throughout history, of Aristotelianism by the fact that Aristotle's study of nature was capable of including and summarizing the experience and achievements of previous philosophies ("Aristotle pursued the very Nature of things with praiseworthy exertion, and if in his exploring and observing, he noted any error made by the men of an earlier century, he refuted and corrected it"; 'De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', in *Meletemata*, p. 2). Aristotle's authentic teaching was therefore the exhortation to understand the history of natural investigation in order to apply it constantly to the present. In Heereboord's view, Aristotle has given us a methodology by which to understand and advocate continuity in the development of philosophy.

Heereboord believed that, after Aristotle, the history of philosophy was involved in the clarification and improvement of his doctrines. However, it was not a linear development, as philosophical method varied and the spirit of Aristotelian thought was often betrayed. Many of those who declared themselves to be Aristotelians followed his philosophy to the letter, but did not bother to understand his instructions about investigation of nature. After Theophrastus and Strato, who studied nature with the open-mindedness that their master would have desired, the study of his works ceased to be connected to the study of nature: "I would add that the school of the Peripatetics from the time of Strato of Lampsacus in 270 BC through so many passing years and centuries to our own age, had said farewell to Nature and had adhered to Aristotle alone" ('De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', p. 3).

Aristotelianism continued to have an active presence right up into the seventeenth century; the tradition had swung constantly between interpretations close to the spirit of its founder and commentaries based on his words. Heereboord attempted to show how the spread of Aristotle's works established continuity between the Greek and Islamic worlds. Natural investigation and the faith in reason breathed vitality into Arab thought and allowed philosophy to gradually develop. For Heereboord, the history of philosophy was a series of interlinking events, and the principal connection was the use of reason. When reason was lacking, as it was in the West after the barbarian invasions, civilization and philosophical thought ceased to exist. When reason returned, so did philosophy. This was the case when Arab commentaries on Aristotle's works began to circulate in medieval Latin (in Spain and Naples). However, reason never disappears from all peoples and was to be found at different times amongst Greeks, Arabs, and Latin peoples ('De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', pp. 3-4).

Even the events of medieval and Renaissance thought alternated between the emphasis on the letter and the spirit of Aristotle's thought. Averroës projected the words of the founding father as those of a *divina oracula*, and in this he was followed by the whole of Latin scholasticism. Rigid textual analysis created generations of thinkers who were

idlers and unoccupied people, who confounded Philosophy with Theology, and have elicited frivolous and useless questions from Philosophy, like foam from water, and then in turn introduced them into Theology. They have begotten a certain monstrous and monastic philosophy that deformed everything with its odious and otiose arguments; and it had bent Religion to the pleasures of Philosophers, and encouraged a squalid and muddy kind of speech and has turned truth into inextricable labyrinths ('De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', p. 4).

Heereboord linked the schoolmen's attitudes not only to the abandonment

of natural investigation, but also to the abandonment of religious purity, which had been overwhelmed by subtle and vain arguments. He identified true Aristotelianism with the defence of scientific reason and a belief in originality of religion, free from sophistry, which developed alongside the honest application of intellect and reason ('De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', p. 5).

By linking the Protestant-Humanist desire for a return to the original purity of faith with his own neo-Aristotelian position, Heereboord hoped to further his anti-Scholastic crusade and prove that Scholasticism did not mean Aristotelianism. He did not believe that the rejection of some pseudo-Aristotelian tendencies also meant cutting the ties that bound the modern era to classical thought. It was necessary to follow the example of Aristotle's real inspiration, which was to take contributions made by his predecessors, reconcile them, and turn them into something new and vital. Taking this lesson from history, Heereboord hopes for a rebirth of Aristotelianism, which harmonized the study of nature (an ever-widening body of knowledge that was awakening mankind) and the religious recognition of the goodness and omnipotence of God, the Creator of both man and nature. He concludes with an appeal which emphasizes the importance of Aristotle, and omits any mention of Descartes:

Finally let us shake the dust from our eyes, and let us not cling to one Aristotle; let us enter the school not only of Aristotle, but also of Nature; let us open the manuscript not only of Aristotle, but also of Nature; and especially let us unfold the pages not only of the former, but also of the latter. Moreover, so that I may put before you in word the true reason for philosophizing, let us adore the very Nature of things, let us seek there the causes; let us observe the discoveries; and let us test after observing by other experiments, and having tested, let us refer and apply them to the use of human life; and thus in Nature, let us celebrate, know, and admire the best, most powerful, and wisest artisan of nature ('De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione', p. 6).

1.4.4. Heereboord has skilfully arranged his arguments and historical data in these brief outlines of the history of philosophy. He managed to create a clear and articulate historical framework. Given that these outlines are part of a collection of disputations, few of the sources are cited, only occasionally is bibliographical information supplied, and he confines himself to essential data on just a few texts. For example, when explaining the origin of the term *philosophia* coined by Pythagoras, Heereboord cites Diogenes Laertius, Cicero's *Tusculanae disputationes*, and St Augustine's *De civitate Dei* ('De origine et progressu philosophiae', p. 380). This facilitates the narration of the historical events behind philosophy and gives him greater clarity for

interpreting the direction of philosophical ideas, but his lack of documentation detracts from the explanation and evaluation of the doctrines, which are often described in short sentences or even with a few adjectives.

Heereboord does, however, carry out the task that he had set himself in these historical tracts, which was to show that the history of *philosophia vetus* vindicated the decisions made by modern philosophers concerning the knowledge of nature. He is able to score points in the Cartesian polemic against the traditionalists by simplifying arguments and concentrating on the historical data that best showed the differences between Aristotle's thought and that of his commentators, and then between Scholasticism and the new ideas of the Reformation. It is not by chance that 'De varia . . . Philosophandi ratione' is to be found at the very beginning of the 'Epistola ad Curatores', nor is it by chance that, in the introductory pages, there is so much emphasis on the different ways in which Aristotle's thought has been interpreted. These historical reviews are successful, in as far as they carry out the polemical purpose that the author has set himself. Though not the product of preconceived ideas, they propose to introduce historical data useful to the pro-Cartesian campaign.

1.5. Thus the importance of Heereboord's historical outlines is only marginal, as can be confirmed by the fact that no history of historiography of philosophy has ever discussed them. However, they are a valuable record of a philo-Cartesian thinker also open to Bacon's ideas, involved in historical and philosophical studies at Leiden University, and concerned with the renewal of philosophical activity. They also demonstrate the importance he attributed to giving a historical perspective to the study of philosophy. Heereboord would not have been able to develop his idea of continuity between ancient and modern thought, if he had not backed it up with historical perspectives.

1.6. There exist a number of interesting studies of Heereboord's personality as a philosopher:

J. N. Paquot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire littéraire des dix-sept provinces des Pays-Bas, de la principauté de Liège et de quelques contrées voisines*, Vol. x (Louvain, 1768), pp. 96-9; M. Siegenbeek, *Geschiedenis der Leidsche Hoogeschool* (Leiden, 1829), Vol. 1, pp. 152, 155, 161-3, 174, 182, 207; Van Der Aa, vi, p. 116; F. Bouillier, *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne* (Paris, 1868), Vol. 1, pp. 270-71; K. Prantl, s.v. 'Heereboord, Adriaan', in ADB, xi, p. 244; F. Sassen, 'A. H. (1614-1661): De opkompst van het Cartesianisme te Leiden', *Algemeen Nederlans Tijdschrift voor Wijsbegeerte en Psychologie*, xxxvi (1942-43), pp. 12-22; J. J. Poortman, *Repertorium der nederlandsche wijsbegeerte* (Amsterdam, 1948), p. 256; Thijssen-Schoute, *Le cartésianisme aux Pays-Bas*, pp. 231-5; Dibon, *Notes bibliographiques sur les Cartésiens hollandais*, pp. 277-8, 294-8; Thijssen-Schoute, *Nederlands Cartesianisme*, pp. 97-101, 114-25; Dibon, pp. 116-19; F. Sassen, *Geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte in nederland tot het einde der negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam and Brussels,

1959), pp. 148–52; Farina, 'Il corpuscolarismo di Henricus Regius: materialismo e medicina in un cartesiano olandese del Seicento', in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento*, pp. 127–9.

Heereboord and the *Meletemata philosophica* are placed within the debate concerning Descartes and the Aristotelians in:

T. Verbeek, 'Tradition and Novelty: Descartes and some Cartesians', in *The Rise of Modern Philosophy: The Tension between the New and Traditional Philosophies from Machiavelli to Leibniz*, ed. T. Sorell (Oxford, 1993), pp. 167–96.

2. JOHANNES GERARDUS VOSSIUS (1577–1649) *De philosophorum sectis*

2.1. Johannes Gerardus Vossius was born in Heidelberg in 1577 to Johannes Voss of Ruremonde (Limburg), a Protestant pastor who had left his Dutch homeland to join the Reformed Church, and Cornelia de Biele. A few months after his birth the family left Heidelberg to return to Holland, because his father had refused to sign a declaration on the Eucharist that had been requested by the Elector. His father died in 1584, but he was able to continue his primary and secondary education in Dordrecht. He attended the University of Leiden from 1595 to 1598, studying Greek under Bonaventura Vulcanius, mathematics under Rudolf Snell, theology under Lucas Trelcatius and Franciscus Gomarus, and philosophy under Pierre du Moulin. In 1600 he was offered the post of director of studies at Dordrecht College. He left that position 15 years later to become the director of the theological college in Leiden. There he established his reputation as a scholar, and in 1618 the university awarded him with the chair in eloquence and chronology. He remained in this prestigious position for several years, in spite of the risk of excommunication in the period 1619–20, following accusations by supporters of Gomarus that his *Historia de controversiis quos Pelagius ejusque reliquiae moverunt* was imbued with Arminianism. But Vossius weathered the storm caused when the Synod of Gouda threatened to excommunicate him in 1620; he was saved by his fame as a scholar and as a conscientious teacher. In 1621 the Synod of Rotterdam revoked the decision, on condition that he write a work refuting the positions he had been accused of. It was not until 1627 that he actually carried this out in *De historicis latinis*, and even then, the refutation was somewhat half-hearted. In 1630 the University of Amsterdam, newly created to compete with Leiden, invited Vossius to take up their chair in history. He taught there from 1633 until his death on 17 March 1649. His son Isaac edited his unpublished works. Isaac, a bizarre philologist and lover of adventure, was the only one of Vossius' children to survive. The others (five sons and one daughter) all died young, having showed signs of quick wit and precocious intelligence.

2.2. Vossius' scholarly production was enormous and covered the whole range of humanist disciplines. Sandys (II, p. 307) has described Vossius as "the greatest polyhistorian of the seventeenth century", and he uses the term in the wider and not in the strictly technical sense used by Morhorf. As far as his works on rhetoric, grammar, and poetics are concerned, we should mention: *Commentarii rhetorici, sive institutionum oratoriarum libri VI* (Leiden, 1606); *Rhetorica contracta* (Leiden, 1606; this is an abridged version of the previous work and was extremely successful both at the time of its first publication and over the following century); *De rhetorices natura ac constitutione et antiquis rhetoribus, sophistis ac oratoribus liber* (Leiden, 1622); *Poeticarum institutionum libri III* (Amsterdam, 1650); *De artis poeticae natura ac constitutione* (Amsterdam, 1647); *De philologia liber* (Amsterdam, 1650); *De quattuor artibus popularibus* (Amsterdam, 1650); *De veterum poetarum temporibus* (Amsterdam, 1652); *De logicae et rhetoricae natura ac constitutione* (The Hague, 1658; a new edition of the 1622 work on rhetoric with an additional section on logic, which constitutes Bk. 1).

Amongst his historical works were: *Ars historica, sive de historiae et historices natura, historiaeque scribendae paeceptis commentatio* (Leiden, 1623); *De historicis graecis libri IV* (Leiden, 1624); *De historicis latinis libri III* (Leiden, 1627); and amongst his theological works: *Historia de controversiis quos Pelagius ejusque reliquiae moverunt, libri VII* (Leiden, 1618; Amsterdam, 1655, edited by Isaac Vossius; this work was partly a history of Pelagius and his followers (Bk. 1) and partly a theological study of Pelagian and semi-Pelagian ideas); *De theologia gentili et physiologia christiana sive de origine et progressu idolatriae, deque naturae mirandis quibus homo adducitur ad Deum libri IV*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1641; 9 bks. in 2 vols., 1668; an extremely rich and varied work with many historical references to ancient philosophy, especially in relation to the barbarian world).

His philosophical works represented only a tiny part of his writings. We have the disputation of his thesis, defended at Leiden on 23 February 1598, *Universales philosophiae Ἀκροτηρίσιμος* (ed. M. Van Straaten; Leiden, 1955); 'De logices natura ac constitutione', which we have already mentioned because it was published posthumously in 1658 with a short work on rhetoric and eloquence; *De cognitione sui libellus* (Leiden, 1640; with some other brief works, Amsterdam, 1654); *De universa matheseos natura ac constitutione liber cui subjungitur chronologia mathematica* (Amsterdam, 1650; a philosophical-mathematical work); *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis libri II* (ed. Isaac Vossius; The Hague, 1657-8).

Vossius' correspondence was edited by P. Colomiès, and published in London in 1690 with an introductory biography. We also have Vossius' complete works, which were published by the Amsterdam printers P. and J. Blaeu in 1695-1701, with separate page-numbering for each of the 6 volumes. The first volume (1695) contains *Etymologicon linguae latinae* (1695), the second volume (1695) all the writings on grammar, the third volume (1697) those on rhetoric, philology, and philosophy, including *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis*, the fourth volume (1699) all the historical writings; *De theologia gentili* is published in the fifth volume (1700); and finally the sixth volume (1701) contains all the remaining theological works.

2.3. Vossius is the quintessential modern European scholar and philologist, striving to create a precise and systematic understanding of humanist studies. His method for classifying disciplines varies according to the viewpoint he wishes to adopt, but the different classifications are complementary and agree on a fundamental division between literature of the polymath and

philosopher. He considers the work of the polymath to be concerned with that part of liberal scholarship that describes stylistic elegance and knowledge of events, in other words the full variety and expression of erudition. He divides polymathy into philology, mathematics, and logic (*De philologia*, in *Opera omnia*, Vol. III, *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione*, p. 39). Philology is, in turn, divided into two parts: one concerning linguistic expression and the other concerning human events in their meaning and context, i.e. history. He believed that history should only concern the pragmatic study of actions, but in a more general sense it should include the study of place (geography), time (chronology), and ancestry (genealogy) (*De philologia*, pp. 49–55).

Pragmatic history could be sacred, civil, or literary. The latter, which Vossius also called *historia scholastica*, dealt with men of learning and their works. As philosophy was the supreme discipline, literary history clearly had to include philosophy. He continuously cites Diogenes Laertius' work as a prime example of *historia scholastica*. But he went further, stating that the study of the lives, the works, and the contribution of great scholars to a given field was the necessary introduction to that field. Vossius writes:

History is a benefit not only to the grammarian, insofar as it enables writers to be understood better, but also for other studies that ought to be aware of history from writers of their own art or science, and indeed especially for Theology and Politics; for the former through Ecclesiastical history, for the latter through civil history (*De philologia*, p. 56).

According to Vossius there were two methods of historical research: the philological method, i.e. examining individual events, and the philosophical method, i.e. looking at events in a wider perspective; the latter was necessarily concerned with providence (*De philologia*, p. 56). The method adopted in a *historia scholastica* could be likewise either philological or philosophical. He did not specify exactly what he meant by the philosophical approach to the history of letters; however, it seems clear that this was to be understood as part of a general order, and that the importance of biographies lay not in isolated events but in the example given by the crucial moments in history.

According to Vossius, philosophy, being the search for wisdom, could develop through study or inspiration; or rather, philosophy, in the strictest sense of the word, achieved knowledge through study, and theology received it through revelation. Philosophy was defined as "the knowledge of divine and human things through causes in the light of nature" or "awareness of all things through causes, in so far as mankind can pursue them by the light of nature" (*De philosophia*, in *Opera omnia*, Vol. III, *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione*, p. 230). There was therefore a division between natural philosophy and practical or active philosophy. The constituent elements of knowledge are expounded by the various disciplines within the sphere of

polymathy, but Vossius considered it dangerous to limit oneself to the discovery of the human and natural world, without attempting to rise above it, through a sense of wonder, to absolute knowledge (*De philosophia*, pp. 229, 231). This concept echoed the Aristotelian view, but given Vossius' humanistic and philological background, it opened out into a cautious sympathy for the theoretical ideals of both the Peripatetic school (whose view of erudition as propaedeutic he particularly praised) and the Eclectic view, which set out to make a thorough revision of the doctrines of the philosophical sects (*De philosophia*, p. 232).

Vossius claimed that philosophical study must build upon all that was best in the various sects that have sprung up through history. The Eclectic attitude avoided the unilateral doctrinal position adopted by different philosophers, who often contradicted and opposed each other; it obviated the awkward circumstance that no one intellect could possibly encompass the whole truth, and allowed greater scholarly balance and the recognition of error (*De philosophorum sectis*, in *Opera omnia*, Vol. III, *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione*, ch. 21, §§ 3-4, p. 313; from here on, only the chapter, paragraph, and page number will be given). The task of the Eclectic philosopher was to investigate all the sects in order to understand what they were saying, why they were saying it, and how they replied to their critics. It was then necessary to ascertain which theses could not be reconciled, and examine them with the aid of reason and the senses (ch. 21, §§ 13-14, p. 314).

The study of the sects and the comparison between them were for Vossius the very core of philosophical activity. The ensuing examination of how to reconcile the sects led to a clearer and more wide-ranging presentation of their doctrines, but not to doctrinal innovation or the construction of a new system. He considered the Eclectic presentation of the philosophical sects as the correct way to approach philosophical discussion, in which it was more important to enrich one's soul than to win the argument. He concluded with the following view of the Eclectic sect: "If we follow [this eclectic method], it will come to pass that we shall be not Ionics, Italics, or Eleatics, not Platonists or Peripatetics, not Stoics or Epicureans, not Sceptics or members of any other sect, but all of these" (ch. 21, § 16, p. 315).

For Vossius, the sects therefore represented a way to the truth, if considered together and not individually. Philosophical life had to start with the sect, because this was essential for the study of philosophy and its further development. However, the sect alone was not the purpose of Philosophy, which while searching for the truth needed to transcend the confines of sect, but not eliminate it. Thus Vossius found himself in the curious position of believing the ancient sects to be the essential element in the creation of philosophy, its growth, and the refinement of method, while at the same time considering them incapable of independently arriving at the truth. All the great philosophers whom he discussed were founders of sects, and he

believed that each had indicated the way to the truth, which in fact did not turn out to be so. Only Potamon's 'elective' sect, if 'sect' it can be called, understood that it was necessary to follow not a single road, but all of them (ch. 21, § 1). Paradoxically, then, it was a so-called second-rate thinker who came closest to the truth. Vossius proved unwilling to take this theory to its logical conclusion. What really concerned him was to convince the universities of his time that the study of philosophy should involve knowledge of all the ancient sects, on the grounds that this was an excellent philosophical training, which helped to prepare for theoretical discussion and which in turn directed the mind towards philosophical knowledge. The history of the sects was therefore that part of the history of letters that prepared for an understanding of philosophical research.

2.4. *De philosophorum sectis*

2.4.1. Vossius' son Isaac used the title *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis* for the posthumous edition. The work is divided into two quite distinct parts: *De philosophorum sectis*, which was published in The Hague in 1657 (117 pp., 8°), and *De philosophia*, which was published the following year with a title page that embraced both works: *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis, libri duo*. *De philosophorum sectis* had its own table of contents and an index of *res memorabiles*, and *De philosophia* likewise had its own table of contents and index. A more sensible arrangement of these writings is to be found in Vol. III of the *Opera omnia*, entitled *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione libri quinque*, a treatise which brings together five works that had previously appeared separately: *De quattuor artibus popularibus*, *De philologia*, *De Mathesi*, *De logica* and last *De philosophia*.

As is pointed out in an address to the reader, *De philosophorum sectis* is more of an appendix than an integral collection of treatises. It takes up pp. 281–315 of the *Opera omnia*, and does not have its own index of names, as these have already appeared together with the other names referred to in *De artium et scientiarum natura ac constitutione* in an index for the whole volume: 'Index locupletissimus omnium huius tractatus librorum'. *De philosophorum sectis* was separately republished in Leipzig in 1690 with an updating by Jakob Ryssel that established it as a considerable work in its own right. *De philosophorum sectis* was conceived as a didactic work when the author was teaching in Amsterdam, as early as 1632 (cf. *Pb. S.*, XII, 11), and reworked towards the end of his life. It consists of 21 chapters divided into paragraphs, which are sometimes very short (there are 210 in all, numbered for each chapter: ch. 6, for example, has 44 paragraphs; chs. 10 and 13 have 4 each). The paragraphs have detailed titles, which describe a precise thesis that is then backed up by various quotations. Sometimes the title of the paragraph is longer than the text of the paragraph itself, which consists exclusively of bibliographical references. The work is introduced by a table of 'Names of those who either founded sects or succeeded the founders of sects', which lists the 17 philosophical schools to be discussed.

Vossius has also left us a brief history of logic, in which he applied the same criteria as in *De philosophorum sectis* (he always speaks *de ortu* and *de constitutione*). It was published as ch. 8 of *De logices natura ac constitutione* (ed. I. Vossius; The Hague, 1658), and in *De logica*, *Opera omnia*, Vol. III, pp. 16–41. Its 30 chapters review Graeco-Roman thinkers

from Socrates and Plato up to Cicero and the Stoics. Degérando (pp. 191–2) considered Vossius' treatise one of the first histories of logic to be written in the modern era.

2.4.2. Vossius divides the history of ancient philosophy into Greek and barbarian thought, according to the Laertian distinction. The first barbarian philosophers were the Chaldeans, who passed on their knowledge to the Jews. Amongst the Asiatic barbarian philosophies that he discusses are those of the Persians, the Indians, the Phoenicians, the Phrygians, the Ethiopians, and the Libyans. The Egyptians came into contact with Chaldean philosophy through Abraham, who introduced them to arithmetic and astrology (ch. 2, § 1). Thus the Jews are seen to be the barbarian people most responsible for developing and spreading philosophical ideas. Vossius also briefly mentions the European barbarian philosophies of the Thracians and Celts.

Vossius begins his account of Greek philosophy with the *fabulosa* philosophy, entrusted to the productions of poets. Non-fabulous Greek philosophy was divided into three fundamental sects: the Ionic, the Italic, and the Eleatic. The founder of the Ionic sect was Thales (the only one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece to be mentioned by Vossius), followed by Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus. Socrates, a pupil of Archelaus, became the first moral philosopher; Vossius writes only three lines on him at the end of ch. 5, § 10. The inclusion of Socrates at the end of the review of Ionic philosophers is intended to emphasize the shift of the centre of philosophical enquiry from Ionia to Athens (which happened with Anaxagoras) and the subsequent shift of interest from physical speculation to ethics. Vossius then describes the Italic sect, founded by Pythagoras, as a thriving school with an influence on Greek and Roman politicians and governments. The Eleatic sect was founded by Xenophanes, with Parmenides as its most authoritative philosopher. He was followed by Zeno and Melissus, who in turn were followed by Leucippus and Democritus. The latter are not considered founders of new sects, but continuators of the doctrinal traditions of Elea. Even though his physical doctrines were derived from the atomists, Epicurus is regarded as the founder of his own sect because he also set up a personal philosophy that constituted a way of life (ch. 8, § 9).

Vossius then moves on to discuss the 'Socratic' sects, by which he means all sects that were in some way linked to Socrates, and not just those that based themselves on his ethical teachings. The Socratic sects included the Cyrenaics (divided into three small sects: the followers of Hegesias, Anniceris, and Theodorus), the School of Elis or Eretrian School, the Megarian school, the Cynics (Antisthenes, Diogenes, Menippus, and Demetrius; this sect is discussed after the Peripatetics, in ch. 18), the ancient Platonic Academy, and the sects that originated from it (the Middle Academy of Arcesilaus and the New Academy of Carneades). Vossius also defines as

Socratic a fourth Academy founded by Philo of Larissa and a fifth founded by Antiochus of Ascalon, again based on probabilist philosophical positions (ch. 15, §§ 1–3). On the other hand, he does not consider the more recent Platonic sects (*Platonici juniores*) to be Socratic, as this particular school followed Plato's metaphysical and religious ideas and not Socratic ethics. Even the Peripatetic sect of Aristotle and Theophrastus had a similar offshoot that involved the Arab commentator Averroës and divided into Nominalists and Realists, which occurred “a little before the year 1100” (ch. 17, § 26).

According to Vossius' categorization, Stoicism also had a close relationship with the Socratic sects, because its doctrines seemed to derive from Cynic philosophy and the ancient academy of Polemon (ch. 19, § 3). Stoicism represented a long succession of philosophers (Vossius does not distinguish between the different periods in its history and lists in the following order: Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Diogenes, Antipater, Posidonius, Panaetius, and the Roman Stoics, but does not mention either Epictetus or Seneca) — this is seen to lead into Christian philosophy which was in partial agreement with the traditional Stoic doctrine (ch. 19, §§ 15–17). Vossius concludes his account of ancient sects with the Sceptics or Pyrrhonians and the Eclectics or Potamonists (after Potamon of Alexandria, who lived at the time of Emperor Tiberius). These philosophers were not considered to be ‘dogmatic’, in so far as they did not commit themselves to the defence and the elaboration of definite philosophical doctrines.

2.4.3. Vossius begins his discussion of barbarian philosophy with the assertion that the Jews derived part of their doctrines from the Chaldeans, who were thus considered the most ancient people in the philosophical tradition (ch. 1, §§ 7–8), although he does not bring forward any arguments to back up this theory. He argues that although the Chaldeans acquainted the Greeks with their passion for astrology, the Greeks owed much to other barbarian philosophies: the Persians for divine speculations (ch. 1, § 20, p. 282), the Indian gymnosophists for the doctrine of reincarnation and moral precepts (ch. 1, §§ 22–3), the Phoenicians for natural investigation (Thales, ch. 1, §§ 28) and esoteric speculation (Pherecides and Pythagoras, ch. 1, § 29), and the Egyptians for the wisdom of their priests in matters of law (ch. 2, § 3).

Vossius does not give much credence to the idea that there had been a close link between Jewish and Greek thought. There were signs, here and there, of links between Jews and Chaldeans, or Jews and Egyptians; and it was only indirectly, through these links, that the Greeks had come into contact with the Jews. Numenius is quoted as saying that Plato atticized Moses (ch. 2, § 3, p. 284), but only in order to emphasize that Moses had been educated by the Egyptians and assimilated much of their culture, as

Plato assimilated Egyptian thought. Vossius avoids any attempt to connect the various beliefs of the barbarian peoples, in particular those of the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, and the Persians. But although he avoids comparisons between them, he does point out similarities without inferring the existence of a divinely revealed 'primitive wisdom'. It is significant that Vossius discusses the relationship of Jewish thought to the barbarian and Greek philosophies, without specifically discussing Jewish thought in itself.

Vossius differs somewhat from the traditional classification of Greek philosophy based on Diogenes Laertius, who distinguished between the Italic and Ionic sects. He considers the Eleatic School to have been independent and not directly descended from the Pythagoreans, and claims that the Epicurean school derived from the Eleatic. In his treatment of the Eleatic school, he describes the historical sequence of the philosophers more fully than the doctrines they conceived. When he compared Parmenides' and Zeno's doctrines to those of the atomists Leucippus and Democritus, he thought they lacked clarity. Their theories on atoms and vacuums are attributed to contacts with Chaldeans, Persians, and even Indians (ch. 7, § 8). Atomism led to the Epicurean sect, whose particular feature was the way it developed around the almost mythic characterization of Epicurus and the example given by his serene life. According to Vossius, the Epicurean doctrines on *voluptas*, the lack of divine interest in the fate of mortals, and the mortality of the soul were dangerous and should be universally rejected. The Epicurean sect was seen as the source of serious moral and religious aberrations, and therefore to be kept in isolation (ch. 8, §§ 17–18).

Vossius perceives Platonism as a composite philosophy — a mixture of Heraclitan, Pythagorean, and Socratic doctrines — and accuses Plato of contaminating Socratic thought with heterogeneous philosophies and thus fundamentally betraying the spirit of Socrates, who had instead been upheld by Xenophon (ch. 12, §§ 1–2). He also argues that Plato's thought had been merely the first, and not the sole, element in the history of the Academic sect. This sect could be divided into many stages, with the more important thinkers in each stage considered the founders of distinct sects (ch. 12, § 3). However, he did give Plato credit for the doctrines of a single divine Creator of the universe (ch. 12, § 5), a world that had a beginning (ch. 12, § 6), divine Creation from pre-existing matter (ch. 12, § 7), ideas as divine thoughts (ch. 12, § 11), and the goal of mankind as a joining with God (ch. 12, § 12). The Platonic dialogue was certainly an original literary form, but one unsuitable for clear and precise philosophical exposition (ch. 12, § 15).

In Vossius' opinion, the so-called Academic sects enjoyed greater vitality because they went back to the teachings of Socrates — the concept of 'knowing yourself' and the theme of ignorance (ch. 13, § 2). Hence the term 'Academic' ended up describing a group of sects, in which Plato's teachings and influence are of somewhat secondary importance, while the later

Platonists constituted the true sect based entirely on Plato. Its representatives are to be found amongst the Jews (Philo), Latins (Apuleius and Chalcidius), the Greeks (Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, and Proclus), and finally, many centuries later, amongst Renaissance philosophers (ch. 16, §§ 6–7). The dominant religious themes in Platonism explained the wide influence of its ideas over many centuries and cultures. This religious interest of Platonism leads Vossius to devote a couple of paragraphs to its development in the Renaissance — the only part of the short work to deal with more recent philosophical positions.

Vossius greatly valued the clear and methodical exposition of Aristotelian thought and its emphasis on the study of nature, considering it to be the most scientific of all philosophies. Even though he agreed that, in matters concerning divine speculation and the nature of the spirit, Plato had been superior to Aristotle (ch. 17, § 8), he praised the clarity and solidity of the foundations of Aristotle's thought (ch. 17, §§ 2–4). He very much regretted the loss of the works Aristotle wrote for a wider public, and stressed the many difficulties undergone by esoteric works and their treatment by restorers and commentators. Significantly, he considered Alexander of Aphrodisias to be the greatest commentator, followed by Averroës, who was his most acute and reliable interpreter amongst the non-Greeks (ch. 17, §§ 16–19).

Vossius has an unusual view of Stoicism, based on the supposed similarities in the training undergone by Zeno, the philosophers of the Ancient Academy (like Polemon), and the founder of Cynicism, Antisthenes (ch. 19, §§ 3–4). He claims that Stoicism partly followed Plato (in the doctrine of divinity and the Good) and in part the Cynics (in morals). In this sense, it could be considered the rightful heir to the tradition of Socrates — philosophy that defined true philosophical activity as a moral experience linked to the quest for the divine. Vossius seems to have been close to Lipsius' theory of Christian Stoicism (Lipsius is not in fact mentioned in this chapter on the Stoics), and he attributes a crucial role to Stoic doctrines in the development of religious thought.

The concluding discussion on Pyrrhonism and Eclecticism gives us a clearer understanding of the author's attitude to ancient thought. Sceptics and Eclectics shared non-dogmatic positions. Vossius makes a distinction between the Academic Sceptics, the Pyrrhonists and the Eclectics: Academics like Arcesilaus and Carneades theorized with a probabilist outlook and therefore, in a sense, accepted the creation of dogmas (ch. 20, §§ 3, 8), while Sceptics like Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus argued that every kind of knowledge was uncertain and wished to meditate on the vanity of dogmatic philosophy (ch. 20, §§ 3–4); and Eclectics like Potamon, Seneca, and Ammonius, Plutarch's teacher, chose between different existing dogmas not in order to support them, but to use them as the basis for discussion and study (ch. 21, § 16). Vossius agrees with this basic attitude towards the dogmas of

the sects — in spite of a few religious reservations, he values the position of the Sceptics, who fought against dogmatic certainties with the knowledge of themselves and reality (ch. 20, §§ 10–12), and agrees whole-heartedly with the Eclectics, who replaced the rigidity of dogmatism with the study of all the elements likely to lead to the discovery of truth (ch. 21, §§ 4, 8–10).

2.4.4. In *De philosophorum sectis* and the historical chapter of *De logices natura ac constitutione*, Vossius is principally interested in introducing the reader to the philosophical sects, and he tends to ignore biographical references, which he seems to have thought irrelevant. Vossius' intent seems to be to show the vast horizon of philosophical research and its intersection with general knowledge. To achieve this he uses all the available historical accounts and quotations from classical literature.

This method did not require Vossius to arrange his material according to each sect's contribution to a given philosophical system. Rather, he simply decided to create chronological and geographical categories, or to be more precise, a categorization that was both chronological and geographical at the same time. He starts by distinguishing between barbarian and Greek philosophy, and then between the Ionic, Italic, and Eleatic sects, making full use of all his material. He reviews the existing material on the sects and philosophers, giving prominence to descriptions of philosophical doctrine, but also giving considerable space to the detailed discussion of sources. One example taken from ch. 6 will be sufficient. This chapter, perhaps the most complete in *De philosophorum sectis*, deals with Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans. The explanation of Pythagoras' thought is the theme that holds the argumentation together, but in addition Vossius includes all the arguments in ancient literature that refer to Pythagoras. First, Vossius discusses the barbarian influences on Pythagoras' thought (Thracian, Egyptian, Persian, Chaldean, Cretan, Jewish) and summarizes what the philosopher took from them, with constant reference to classical writers and historians such as Diogenes Laertius, St Clement of Alexandria, and Origen (ch. 6, §§ 2–5). He then mentions Pherecydes of Siros and his doctrine of the immortal soul — he was supposed to have convinced Pythagoras to become a philosopher (ch. 6, §§ 6–7). He then discusses whether Pythagoras ever wrote any works, but did not draw any definite conclusions, since the only information available came from his followers and biographers (ch. 6, §§ 10–12). After a detailed analysis of all this Pythagorean literature, and the Alexandrine and patristic accounts, Vossius moves on to discuss what is known about Pythagoras' doctrines, explaining that his teachings were of two types: either clear and open to the understanding, or symbolic and mystical (ch. 6, §§ 13–14). He deals at length with the second teaching method, and briefly recounts some of his moral teachings and the cornerstones of his theoretical teachings, without mentioning the doctrine that number is the

essence and principle of reality, considering only arithmetic (i.e. the science of numbers and shapes) as the central concern of Pythagoras and his school (ch. 6, §§ 15–17).

The exposition of Pythagoras' thought continues through the analysis of his school. He discusses extensively the rule of silence, common property, and the ascetic preparation for political life (ch. 6, §§ 19–28). The doctrines of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans are explained indirectly by reviewing those thinkers who were influenced by Pythagorism, and by criticising Pythagoras' principal errors including the doctrine of reincarnation and the prohibition on eating animal meat and beans (ch. 6, §§ 29–39). At this stage, Vossius cautiously makes his own views known. With the backing of the entire patristic literature, he rejects the concept of metempsychosis (ch. 6, § 32), but he argues also that the prohibition of meat and beans could have had some symbolic meaning, and therefore should not be ridiculed (ch. 6, § 39). He concludes the chapter on the Italic sect with a discussion of Pythagoras' cosmological doctrines — the 'central fire' and the movement of the Earth. Vossius discusses the ancient philosophers who followed these last doctrines and those thinkers who revived them in the Renaissance (starting with Nicholas of Cusa). He discusses these theories without taking sides, but rather confines himself to pointing out that after the Roman condemnation of 1616 (he is referring to the Congregation of the Index, which was later fatal to Galileo), heliocentrism "was powerfully and felicitously defended by many" (ch. 6, § 41). There are a few final considerations on other Pythagorean thinkers and their writings, which have been lost (ch. 6, §§ 43–44).

The structure of Vossius' work improves, simplifies, and rationalizes such traditional methods as those adopted by Diogenes Laertius. It differs from the ancient histories by attempting a critique of the nature of philosophy. Because of the way he organized his material, Vossius was unable to discuss each philosopher's doctrine in depth. Still, if one uses the chapter on Pythagoras as an example, it can be observed how the exposition of the doctrine is continuously interrupted by interjections about the historical context, the various stages in the philosopher's life, the formation and the spread of his ideas, and finally the school and its traditions. The historical context does not, however, have the necessary depth for a historical analysis of Pythagoras' thought — it simply arranges the order in which that thought is explained and discusses the thought, along with the life and the historical and literary circumstances. The description in *De philosophorum sectis* of the precise nature of the text is often confused by a wealth of historical detail (although these details are by no means superfluous or simply of curiosity value, as in the case of Laertius or the late-medieval writer Walter Burley). Some typical examples can be found in ch. 7 on the Eleatic sect, in which the full characterization of its speculative theories is not attempted, because the only connecting elements are the relationships of teacher to disciple that join the

various philosophers. Equally, in the chapters dealing with the sects that grew from from Socrates' teachings, the precise doctrinal influence is not stated, as priority is again given to the teacher-disciple relationship. The incomplete nature of this short work can only be partly explained by the lack of focus on speculative innovation. The conspicuous gaps in the treatise (there are just a few lines on Socrates, Empedocles, and the Sophists, while Heraclitus, Protagoras, and Gorgias are not even mentioned) are undoubtedly due to the schematic nature of the work. On the other hand, the lack of depth of analysis is principally attributable to Vossius' own method. This is also demonstrated in ch. 8 of *De logices natura ac constitutione*, where the presentation of doctrines on logic appears to be less important than a discussion of the historical problems created by the arrival and the consolidation of the study of logic.

One particular aspect of Vossius' method is that, even when it is possible, he very rarely quotes directly from the author under discussion. There are, for example, no quotations from the works of Plato or Aristotle. His arguments are interwoven with doxographic and patristic accounts, and the titles and authors of commentaries. This is clearly intentional — a scholar of Vossius' ability would have been familiar with the entire range of extant writings by ancient philosophers, and he regularly refers to them in *De philosophorum sectis*. Vossius clearly chose not to quote from the philosophers' works because he intended *De philosophorum sectis* simply to be a guide to philosophical study. His history is not supposed to replace the reading of the texts themselves; its purpose is to clarify their inherent problems, and give a thorough portrayal of the thinkers, with the aid of the vast amount of material available.

2.5. Vossius' fame as a man of learning contributed to the success of *De philosophorum sectis*, in spite of the sketchiness of the work. His contemporaries saw it as an attempt at a scholarly systematization of the historical accounts and doxographical writings on ancient philosophy. They were particularly impressed by his treatment of the sects, in which the philosophers' biographies and the catalogue of their works were almost completely eliminated, while most attention was given to the doctrines, backed up by a review of the historical accounts. The anonymous English author of the 'Life and Writings of Thomas Stanley Esq.' considered Vossius to be the immediate forerunner of Stanley's monumental work (in Stanley, *History*, fol. [2]r).

Because of the work's brevity and didactic purpose, it was widely used in the universities as an introduction to the systematic study of philosophy. It met with great approval amongst Dutch and German university teachers at a time when the history of philosophy was becoming a common feature of academic curricula. In 1690 Ryssel's enlarged edition was published. He

inserted sections to cover important omissions and expanded existing parts, updating the work and putting it on a par with Stanley's history (at least as far as intellectual rigour is concerned). Ryssel's edition gave an extra lease of life to this short work, at a time when weightier and more comprehensive histories were being made available to scholars.

In the early eighteenth century, the leading representatives of German culture had many reservations about the work, because they could draw comparisons with these other works. Its reviewer in the *Neue Bibliothec* (Gundling?) wrote that *De philosophorum sectis* was full of errors. Johann Franz Budde was disappointed in Ryssel's enlargement, partly because he considered Vossius' work to be an outline and not an exhaustive study (J. F. Buddeus, *Isagoge historico-theologica ad theologiam universam singulasque ejus partes* (Leipzig, 1730), Vol. 1, Bk. 1, ch. 4, p. 197). In the additions he made to Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae*, Dorn praised Vossius' historical writings and their usefulness to scholars, but he found his treatment of the history of philosophy somewhat unsatisfactory, as he did Ryssel's expanded version. He preferred the more thorough account of barbarian philosophy to be found in *De Theologia gentili* (Jonsius, Vol. 11, Bk. 111, p. 155). Brucker was disappointed by the sketchiness, the inadequacy of many parts and the author's errors of judgement. He did however consider Vossius' original work to be superior to Ryssel's expanded version (Brucker, Vol. 1, pp. 35–6). The work was generally appreciated by polyhistorians as an example of the breadth and variety of Vossius' learning. Morhof praised the scholarly precision of his approach, but complained even more about its sketchiness. He considered it to be a first step towards a "true and finished history", which nobody had seriously attempted as yet (Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 1, § 4, p. 4; also *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. 1, ch. 2, 'De historia literaria', p. 20) — Morhof was unaware of the existence of Stanley's work. Struve was more cautious (Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 156), and, while he mentions Morhof's praise, he changes its emphasis, strongly criticizing the fragmentary and overly philological nature of the work.

In his letter-dissertation to Minutoli in 1673, Bayle's criticisms of the work were historical and philological, rather than philosophical. He disagreed with the order in which the philosophical sects were supposed to have developed according to the *De philosophorum sectis*, as well as the identity of their followers and their reception (Bayle, *Œuvres diverses* (The Hague, 1727–31), Vol. 1v, pp. 535b–536a). He also made a historical assessment of the work in his review of Cozzandus' *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum*, where he found the *De philosophorum sectis* far more methodical and reliable than Hornius' *Historia philosophica* (NRL, June 1685, art. 1v, in *Œuvres diverses*, Vol. 1, p. 307). Bayle also criticized some of the assertions made in *De philosophorum sectis* in his *Dictionnaire* under the headings of 'Anaxagoras' and 'Pythagoras'. In reference to Anaxagoras' physical theories he criticized

both *De origine et progressu idolatriae* and *De philosophorum sectis*, and accused Vossius of not having cross-checked the assertions made in his many writings (Vol. I, p. 246). In his *Nouvelles de la république des lettres* (August 1702, pp. 205–7, review of Vol. III of Vossius' *Opera omnia*) he confined himself to questioning the reliability of Vossius' treatment of Pythagoras' thought, and showed that *De philosophorum sectis* was little more than "un grand nombre de choses curieuses". Bayle's criticism marked the end of the work's influence, although it did continue to circulate in German-speaking lands. It was no longer considered a work of the required scholarly precision (as can be deduced from Degérando's comments in the introduction to his history of philosophy: cf. p. 144). Brucker was the last eighteenth-century scholar to show esteem for the work on the history of philosophy written by the leading light of seventeenth-century scholarship.

2.6. On Vossius' life, writings and cultural ideas:

C. Tollino, *Oratio in obitum d. J. V.*, (Amsterdam, 1649); H. Witte, *Memoriae philosophorum, oratorum, poetarum, historicorum*, Decade 5 (Frankfurt, 1679), pp. 96–105; Nicéron, XIII, pp. 89–127; XX, pp. 61–3 (brief additions); Jöcher, IV, coll. 1716–20; H. Tollius, *Oratio de G. J. V. Grammatico perfecto* (Amsterdam, 1778); Saxe, IV, pp. 275–7; J. G. De Crane, *Oratio de V. Iuniorumque familia, saeculo praesertim XVI insigni eruditionis laude clara, optime de literis apud posteros etiam merita* (Groningen, 1821); BUAM, XLIV, pp. 136–9; Van Der Aa, XI, pp. 122–4; Sandys, II, pp. 307–9; *Real-Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, Vol. XX (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 764–8; F. Grootens, 'De betekenissen van V.' *Ars historica*, *Historisch Tijdschrift*, XX (1941), pp. 237–74; Benardini-Righi, pp. 107–13; J. M. Romein, 'In V. Voetspoor', *Jaarboek der Universiteit van Amsterdam*, 1948–49, pp. 60–73; Dibon, pp. 238–40; C. S. M. Rademaker, *G. J. V. (1577–1649)* (Zwolle, 1967); A. Van Den Berg, 'G. J. V., 1577–1649', *Spiegel Historiae*, III (1968), pp. 95–103.

On the reception and influence of *De philosophorum sectis*:

P. Bayle, review of J. G. V., *Opera omnia*, Vol. III, *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis*, in NRL, August 1702, pp. 203–7; J. F. Reimann, *Versuch einer Einleitung in die 'Historiam litterariam'*, Vol. IV (Halle (Magdeburg), 1710), p. 298 ff.; 'Nachricht von den Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', NB, II (1711), pp. 380–81; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, pp. 154–6; Stolle, pp. 422–3; Bayle, Vol. I, ch. I, p. 216; Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 35–6; Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. I, ch. I, § 4, p. 4; *Polyhistor literarius*, Bk. I, ch. 2, p. 20; Degérando, pp. 144, 191–2 n. F.

On the historiography of philosophy:

Braun, p. 67; Del Torre, p. 47 n.

3. GEORG HORNIUS (1620–1670) *Historia philosophica*

3.1. Georg Hornius (Horn) was born in 1620 in Kemnat in the Upper Palatinate. His father was a supporter of the Reformed Church in the area. The events of the Thirty Years' War kept the family constantly on the move from one part of Germany to another. He studied medicine and theology at Nuremberg, and studied theology at Groningen for six years and at Leiden. He then spent two years in England as tutor for an aristocratic family. Having attained a doctorate in theology from Leiden in 1648, he was offered teaching posts at Frankfurt an der Oder and Heidelberg. He decided, however, to go to Harderwijk in Gelderland, where he had been given the chair in history, politics, and geography. The acceptance of this post did not mean that he had lost interest in his theological studies; on the contrary, he developed an interest in the history of religion and in secular history from a theological point of view.

Thanks to the considerable influence of his historical teachings, which had found favour with the religious authorities and students alike, he was promoted in 1652 to Rector of Harderwijk. In the following year, Leiden University offered him the chair in history, a prestigious post that had once belonged to Vossius. Hornius accepted and stayed there until his death. The sheer volume of his writings that appeared after 1653 testifies to the untiring activity of this scholar of universal history and the theology of history. His work was always concentrated on joining general questions of chronology to a historical view based on providence, and drawing considerably on the *Chronicon Carionis* and the works of Sleidan and Melancthon. He proposed a periodization that recognized between the barbarian invasions and the fifteenth century the presence of a *media aetas*. At the end of his life Hornius' constitution was exhausted, and he showed signs of mental imbalance, immersing himself in dubious alchemical enterprises and allowing some charlatans to cheat him of five thousand florins. He died, insane, in Leiden on 10 November 1670.

3.2. Georg Hornius' writings focus exclusively on universal history, chronology, and historical geography, and had some success as textbooks. They were frequently reprinted and even translated into French. Amongst the more important works were: *Rerum britannicarum, libri VII, quibus res in Anglia, Scotia et Hibernia ab anno 1645 bello gestae exponuntur* (Leiden, 1648; a product of his stay in England); *De originibus americanis libri IV* (The Hague, 1652); *Accuratissima orbis antiqui delineatio, sive Geographia vetus, sacra et prophana, exhibens quidquid imperiorum, regnorum, principatuum, rerum publicarum ab initio rerum ad praesentem usque mundi statum* (Amsterdam, 1653); *Dissertatio de vera aetate mundi qua sententia illorum refellitur qui statuunt Natale Mundi tempus annis minimum 1440 vulgarem aeram anticipare* (Leiden, 1659; this work started a long polemic

with Isaac Vossius); *Historia ecclesiastica et politica* (Leiden, 1665; this work was extremely successful and widely-read); *Arca Noae, sive Historia imperiorum et regnorum, ab condito orbe ad nostra tempora* (Leiden, 1666); *Arca Mosis, sive Historia mundi quae complectitur primordia rerum naturalium omniumque artium ac scientiarum* (Leiden, 1668; this work was partly historical and partly scientific, in which he dealt with arguments concerning chemistry, physics, and anatomy); *Orbis politicus imperiorum, regnorum, principatum, rerum publicarum, cum memorabilium historiis et geographia veteri et recenti* (Leiden, 1668); *Ulyssea, sive Studiosus peregrinans omnia lustrans litora* (Leiden, 1671). Hornius published Sleidan's *De quatuor monarchiis* (Leiden, 1669; using also Meibom's notes). Also to be noted is a translation into Latin of a Dutch ambassadorial report from the Chinese imperial court: *Legatio batavica ad magnum Tartariae Chamum Sungteium, modernum Sinae imperatorem* (Amsterdam, 1668).

Besides these, there are some minor works dealing with a variety of questions, such as *De statu Ecclesiae britannicae hodierno* (Gdansk, 1647), which discusses political and ecclesiastical events in England, and *Dissertationes historicae et politicae* (Leiden, 1665). His only work on a strictly philosophical subject was *Historiae philosophicae libri VII, quibus de origine, sectis et vita philosophorum ab orbe condito ad nostram aetatem agitur* (Leiden, 1655), which however is linked to his other writings on universal history of art and science. We are told by the author himself that this work was completed in 1640, when he was only 20 years old.

3.3. Georg Hornius' concept of philosophy can be inferred from his treatment in the *Historia philosophica*, and particularly from the first book, in which he clarifies his terminology. Rather than give an immediate definition of philosophy, he preferred to analyse the word *sapientia*, which covered all those activities that could have been considered philosophical. He believed that the Greek term came from the Phoenician word *Sufes*. "In the Phoenician language the word *sufes* means the highest of magistrates. . . . We maintain that the origin of the [Greek] word *sophos* is to be sought nowhere else than in the Punic word *Sufes*, for the Phoenicians, as is known, derived their own language from the Syrophoenicians or the Canaanites" (*Historia philosophica*, p. 2). The Greeks changed the moral-political meaning to one that expressed the study of all aspects of life and reality. The Latin terms *sapio* and *sapere* derive from this sense of delving deep into the nature of things. "In very ancient times in Greece, such *Sufes* were Charondas, Solon, Lycurgus, and other *nomothetai* [lawgivers], at the same time both wise men and magistrates. Hence there should be no doubt that *sophos* [wise] came from thence; whence arises later *sapio*, *sapiens*, *sapientia*" (*Historia philosophica*, p. 3). Therefore, *Philosophia* is exclusively an attitude of self-awareness and a belief in the study of all reality (*Historia philosophica*, p. 3: "Hence it is called *Philosophia*, namely from the love with which we all pursue it").

As far as Hornius was concerned, philosophy differed from wisdom in that the former could change its approach to the latter; thus one should speak of philosophies rather than philosophy, reflecting that there were

many ways of studying the final and total reason for things. Wisdom, on the other hand, was unique and came from God, as the scriptures testified (*Historia philosophica*, p. 7: "This eternal God created the greatest gifts of wisdom both for his angels and his human beings, to whom, as his overseers, he had entrusted the rule of the world, because it could not have been done without wisdom"). This demonstrated the vanity of philosophies that did not consider wisdom in its entirety. The wide variety of philosophies was not a negative factor, if they resulted from different ways of contemplating God, the single source of wisdom. On the other hand, it was a sign of arrogance and muddled thinking where attempts were made to contemplate sources of wisdom other than God. This distinction was made throughout the *Historia philosophica*, and was the criterion used for judging philosophical development. From the start of the work, Hornius referred to a "natural" philosophy known to Adam, who was aware of the nature of things and therefore shared in the wisdom created by God. He spoke of Adam's fall as the loss of man's natural and habitual contemplation of wisdom. *Naturalis sapientia* disappeared after the original sin; the mind was obscured "by deep shadows of ignorance". The will, "inflamed with hatred of wisdom", corrupted philosophy by depriving it of the ability to lead men to perfection within their lifetimes (*Historia philosophica*, p. 14). Even the angels' rebellion and the expulsion of Lucifer and his followers from the "heavenly Academy" were, in Hornius' opinion, the demonstration that the disavowal of divine wisdom could only lead to error and confusion (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 7-11).

The most interesting aspect of the *Historia philosophica* is its developing clarification of the terminology concerning the relationship between the various philosophies and wisdom. Hornius does not reject a history of 'wisdom' in order to write a history of 'philosophy'. On the contrary, he examines the latter in the light of the way the former has spread throughout mankind, becoming synonymous with its spiritual life. His definition of philosophy is therefore wide-ranging, and covers both philosophies with a positive attitude to wisdom and philosophies that attempted to violate natural wisdom by ignoring its divine origins. Hornius studied both groups of philosophies, because he thought it was only possible to understand the overall meaning of philosophy by comparing their separate developments. Having completely assimilated the providential views of Protestant historians, such as Cario, Melancton, Peucer, and Sleidan, he confidently identified a divine plan in the history of philosophy and its achievements, a design that made use of every manifestation of man's quest for wisdom.

The presentation of all the diverse philosophies imposed an obligation to describe their dimensions and their implications: from this arose the intertwining of the work of the historian as theologian of history with that of the historian as scholar. Above all Hornius felt the need for philological criticism to back up what he considered to be 'integral' history, in other words theo-

logical history. He realized that a strictly historical study of philosophical events had never been attempted, and he was quick to proclaim the importance of this kind of work. In the Preface to the *Historia philosophica*, while discussing the nature of his work, which he had conceived and written as a young man, he underlined its importance (defining it as didactic and elementary), but at the same time he emphasized the importance of the *historia philosophica* as a genre.

Hornius hoped that others would take up the challenge to create and enrich (*condendam exornandamque*) a true history of philosophy: he believed that this was the desire of all who had considered the totality of knowledge as a means of understanding the evolution of man's intellectual world. Quoting the German scholar Bartholomäus Keckerman, author of some essays on historical method published as *De natura et proprietatibus historiae commentarius* (Hanau, 1610), Hornius explained that the history of philosophy complemented other historical work, following Bacon's encyclopaedic ideal. This reference to the English philosopher was significant: by supporting the plan outlined in *De augmentis scientiarum*, Hornius intended to demonstrate to philologists and historians of his own time that, because of the deplorable state of *historia philosophica* inherited from antiquity, this work could no longer be postponed. He was unequivocal in his assessment of the state of ancient historiography, and asserted that what little remained was totally insufficient (he talks of "fragments few and confused, without heads and tails, maimed and mutilated"). The task of modern learning was not so much to complement and integrate past knowledge as to refound it.

According to Hornius, the interest in philosophers, their works, their doctrines, their ways of life, was not of recent origin, as could be seen in the writings of Cicero and Claudian; but the modern historian needed to organize his material in an innovative fashion, to create a global view of the history of philosophy (*Historia philosophica*, 'Lectori', p. 6). Since the collapse of scholasticism and the profound renewal carried out by the humanists and *novatores*, the history of philosophy was not able to select various philosophical events and their accounts at random, but had to consider the overall development of thought. Like Heereboord, Hornius divided philosophy between *vetus* and *nova*: the period of *vetus* philosophy had just drawn to a close with the exhaustion (*desuetudo*) of scholasticism in the person of its last representative, the Occamist theologian Gabriel Biel. This period in the history of philosophy had to be studied in order to compare what philosophical investigation had been with what the *nova* philosophy was about to become ("The new [philosophy] is that being cultivated today by philosophizing minds, split up into divers sects"). The *philosophia vetus* only acquires real importance when compared to the *nova* (*Historia philosophica*, 'Lectori', p. 7).

Hornius felt that it would be more useful for him to concentrate on the

old philosophy, as the *philosophia nova* was still in its early stages, and it would not be possible to outline its entire history. However, when investigating classical and medieval thought, it was impossible to avoid the stages through which modern thought had had to pass. He was aware that in the seventeenth century there developed a specifically 'philosophical' character to contemporary thought. For Hornius it was a century that had introduced innovative thinking into philosophy and science, had criticized tradition, and had shown mankind new ways in which it could develop. He claimed that "philology" and "criticism" (*Crisis*) had dominated the sixteenth century, and that the best minds (Erasmus, Scaliger, Casaubon, Lipsius, Salmasius, and Heinsius) had devoted their energies to correcting and explaining classical texts, while his century had been anxious to put traditional doctrines behind it and develop new ones (*Historia philosophica*, 'Lectori', p. 7).

The attraction of novel ideas was so strong that ancient doctrines long forgotten were being dusted off and given a new lease of life. According to Hornius, the philological approach had been discarded in favour of philosophical inventiveness, and this might lead to the acceptance of speculative ideas that had already run their course, without the necessary historical verification having been made. The haste with which some of the *novatores* worked could have led to debatable results (amongst those mentioned were Vives, Patrizi, Ramus, Campanella, Van Helmont, Descartes, Hobbes). Therefore he believed that the desire for innovation (whose attraction was a kind of siren song) was not enough to produce suitable *philosophiae novae*, but that philosophy must not be separated from philological criticism, which could make a decisive contribution to new discoveries.

Hornius stated that he had no desire to take a clear position on the new philosophy. He confined himself to a quotation from the Protestant Aristotelian theologian Jacob Schegk (*De demonstratione*, Bk. 1 (Basle, 1564)), who described the ideal of philosophy as based on theology which would in turn would give it its full support. The search for the new must not, therefore, abandon a religious vision of philosophical activity, closely linked to wisdom and revealed truth.

It was clear to Hornius that the relationship between the philosophical method of the *novatores* and natural reason illuminated by God's creative will, i.e. wisdom, must be clearly made and not repudiated by rejection or the temptation to become self-sufficient. The tendency to start without tradition, in his opinion, clashed with the irrefutable fact of divine Creation, which gave man an infallible guide in his intellectual and practical quests. If philosophy accepted this guidance by natural wisdom, it would assist theology rather being diverted into vain and disordered studies.

Hornius did not repudiate the previous two centuries of development, and felt fully involved both in the Reformation's attack on Scholasticism and in the rebirth of literature and the emergence of philology. He was very suspi-

cious of those who wished to separate knowledge of the sacred from philosophy. He contrasted genuine philosophical study, restored by the Reformation and by humanist methodology ("that philosophy which is both natural and very ancient"), with "Sophistry", the search for the novel where there was emptiness and error. Not all the new philosophers could be accused of sophistry, nor had they all abandoned a productive relationship with theology. However there was a considerable risk of not understanding where sects and errors led to, if there continued to be a lack of historical and critical awareness of past philosophies (*Historia philosophica*, 'Lectori', p. 8).

It is apparent that Hornius wished to write a history of *philosophia vetus* because he was concerned about the indiscriminate acceptance of new ideas. By studying the content and development of ancient, classical, barbarian, and medieval philosophies in a philological way, he felt that it would be possible to prepare the ground for substantial progress towards the understanding of 'religious wisdom'. If this were done, there would be no more rediscoveries of ancient philosophies without the necessary examination of the problems they posed; and, above all, the genuine and established philosophies would not be discarded in favour of empty and formulaic investigations and the repetition of the errors made by the sects. It is clear from his citation of the passage from Schegk, stating the importance of replacing the 'sects' and 'errors' with religious philosophy, that Hornius did not believe that authentic philosophy could be found through adherence to a sect. This position was unequivocally restated throughout his *Historia*. Historical study was thus justified in the light of the contrasting tendencies of the *philosophia nova*. He believed that the proper interpretation of new ideas must stem from the fundamental categories used in reading ancient texts and analysing historical accounts, and that this resulted in the rediscovery of what was timeless and original, real and well-founded, always new and always vital.

3.4. *Historia philosophica*

3.4.1. The *Historia philosophica* is dedicated to councillor Walter Strickland, and opens with a brief Preface to the reader. It is made up of 7 books of varying length, from 30 pp. in Bk. vi to 87 pp. in Bk. ii. It has a total of 387 pp. The books do not have their own titles, but carry the same sub-title, *De Sapientia Veterum*, and are divided into chapters preceded by a summary. There are 11 chapters in Bk. i, 13 in Bk. ii, 20 in Bk. iii, 6 in Bk. iv, 10 in Bk. v, 13 in Bk. vi, and 16 in Bk. vii. There are neither marginal notes nor footnotes, but bibliographical references are incorporated into the text in abbreviated form. The work ends with an 'Index verborum ac rerum locupletissimus', but there is no table of contents and no other special index.

Some parts of the work are repetitive; the worst example is Bk. iii, ch. 14, where the characteristics of the first seven philosophical sects already considered in chs. 10-12 are

summarized again for no apparent reason ; clearly these chapters were added later. In the first draft, Hornius probably began his discussion on Greek thought directly with Plato, with just a few brief notes on the preceding sects (which he defined as *Mythica*, *Ionica*, and *Italica sive Pythagoraea*: *Historia philosophica*, pp. 186–7).

The *Historia philosophica* is an imperfectly structured work that lacks an overall view of its constituent parts. This is further borne out by the continual digressions in every chapter, in which the author abandons the principal theme to discuss etymological, historical, and philological questions. It would appear that many parts of the work were merely collections of notes and considerations awaiting a more systematic development.

3.4.2. The periodization in the *Historia philosophica* is of some interest : it serves as a scholarly framework that treats all the patristic and Renaissance debates on the wisdom of Oriental and barbarian peoples. Furthermore, Hornius goes beyond the chronological limits imposed by Laetius' tradition and deals with Christian, Scholastic, and Renaissance thought. He wishes to elaborate the entire history of the *philosophia vetus* up to the very first beginnings of the *philosophia nova*. As he adopted a theological interpretation that included all sapiential and philosophical phenomena in the history of philosophy, he was obliged in his first book to outline the development of ancient thought before the Flood. As a result, the biblical events and myths from Greek and Oriental religions were placed in an unspecified historical context, earlier than the first signs of civilization and thought that he believed constituted the core of ancient wisdom.

The second book of the *Historia philosophica* outlined the doctrines of the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Indians, and Jews, as well as the philosophy of northern peoples such as the Germans and Celts, who were not considered to have contributed to the development of Greek philosophy. Hornius follows the example of Vossius and also discusses the mythologies and religious doctrines of the barbarian peoples, ignored by many of the ancient historians. After having dealt with the northern races, he concludes the second book with a chapter on the wisdom of the Jews, a tradition handed down from the patriarch Abraham and kept up by Moses (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 126–34).

According to the third book of the *Historia philosophica*, Greek philosophy was begun back in mythical times with the descendants of Noah's son Japheth (Iapetus). Hornius classified Greek thought into three periods: *periodus heroica* (Lycurgus, Zeleucus, Cadmus, Jason, Hercules, Nestor, Ulysses), *periodus theologica sive mythica* (Homer, Orpheus, Linus, Hesiod, the Seven Wise Men), and *periodus philosophica*. In this last period (immediately following the Seven Wise Men), the historical conditions of the Greek peoples became favourable for the creation of various sects, which were able to enjoy complete freedom in their investigations into human and natural reality, and were not forced to find agreement between themselves. Hornius listed the different opinions amongst ancient thinkers and histori-

ans as to the number of the philosophical sects: a great many positions could be distinguished, 288 to be exact, following Varro (as reported by St Augustine), but he believed that the major differences could be traced backed to the ethnic characteristics of the Greek peoples (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 170–71). Two principal currents came out of the confusion of these early developments, the Ionic and the Italic, which constituted the Greek *prisca philosophia*. While the Ionic sect had been founded by Thales and was the more ancient sect, Hornius preferred to begin his analysis of the philosophical period with the Italic sect, as the term 'philosophy' had been coined by its founder Pythagoras (*Historia philosophica*, p. 172). Pythagoras' teachings and his school then produced Ocellus, Archytas, Philolaus, and Parmenides. Thales founded the Ionic sect, whose leading proponents were Anaximander, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Democritus, and Protagoras (the relationship between these last two and the Eleatic school is not taken into account). Unlike Stanley, who saw these two sects as the twin foundations of all Greek philosophy, Hornius perceived them as marking the end of the period of investigation into nature. The sects that followed were to have features all their own, and represent a period of greater philosophical self-awareness.

The main features of the Greek *philosophia nova* that followed the *prisca philosophia* were the appearance of Socrates, the creation of Platonic thought, and finally the dominance of Aristotelian philosophy, which "first collected the scattered parts of philosophy into one body and system" (*Historia philosophica*, p. 194). Philosophy acquired a scientific framework with the Peripatetic School, and after Aristotle Greek philosophical sects only developed doctrines that attempted to correct and improve his philosophical system, not to replace it (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 198–9).

Hornius interpreted the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the minor sects (the Cynics, the Megarians, the Pyrrhonians, and the Neoplatonists) as participating in the high-point in philosophical movement that occurred just before Christ's coming. Around the time of Augustus, the disputes between Neoplatonists and Stoics and the tendency of the former to splinter into sects led to the founding by Potamon of a new sect, the Eclectics. Hornius too concluded his analysis of the Greek philosophical sects with this school, one that refused to follow any one philosophical authority, and in a sense broke with the sectarian tradition. The Eclectics built a bridge between Greek thought and that of the Church Fathers (*Historia philosophica*, p. 222).

According to Hornius, barbarian thought developed alongside Greek thought; in Bk. iv he briefly considered the developments amongst the Phoenicians, the Scythians, and the Getae, but his analysis of Jewish thought after the return from Babylon (the Sadducean, Pharisaic, and Essene sects, the philosophy of Philo) and Roman thought that developed between the time of the kings (the wisdom of the Twelve Tables) and the Antonine era

was more detailed. He described barbarian thought as having a less varied history than Greek thought, but it met with a similar fate: it was completely overtaken by the coming of Christ, who is true wisdom (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 261–2). The light of Christ's revelation was the authentic philosophy. Hornius stated in Bk. v of his *Historia* that from the Apostles and St Paul onwards Christian wisdom, manifested in the rejection of the pagan sects, was further strengthened by the Apologists and the Church Fathers in their struggle against the defenders of paganism — Apollonius of Tyana, Celsus, Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Numenius — who vainly attempted to impede the triumph of Christian philosophy. The heresies, with Gnosticism in the lead, were no more successful in their attempt to obscure the clarity of the Christian doctrines, which were even able to inspire moral considerations amongst pagan philosophers. Hornius pointed to examples of near-Christian thought in the works of Seneca, Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, and Epictetus (*Historia philosophica*, p. 280).

Hornius pointed out at the end of Bk. v that the most important later developments took place in the Eastern Empire and amongst the Arabs, since the barbarian invasions had interrupted the proper development of philosophy and culture in the West. In the East, the Greeks became pre-occupied with subtle but minor arguments, while the Arabs made a considerable contribution to science and the arts, especially in Spain where Averroës lived. This affected Jewish thought, which also flourished. Stagnation and ignorance was predominant in the West up to the ninth century, with one exception: John Scotus Eriugena. He introduced the era of Scholasticism, which was also picked up in the Greek world of the East, thanks to the efforts of John of Damascus; but it was in the West that it had its great successes. Basing himself on Caspar Peucer's adaptation of the *Chronicon Carionis* and his interpretation of medieval Scholasticism, Hornius distinguished between a first period of Scholasticism dominated by the figure of Abelard, a second period running from Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas to Durandus of Saint Pourçain, and a third period in which the gradual exhaustion of the Scholastic method took place and finally ended with Gabriel Biel.

A real renewal of Western culture and philosophy came about only in the fourteenth century, thanks to the arrival of men of learning from the Greek Empire of the East. In Hornius' opinion, the rescuing of the Greek classical tradition, which Byzantine culture itself had not fully understood, was the determining factor in the advent of the vast movement created around humanism. This gave rise to the philosophy of humanists like Bruni, Valla, Wessel Gansfort, and Agricola and the philosophy of reformers like Savonarola, "who, leaving behind the mental blindness of those who had gone astray, made a serious effort to recover the true philosophy" (*Historia philosophica*, p. 306). Ficino brought about the rebirth of Platonism, but doctrines

denying religion and the immortality of the soul also appeared (Pomponazzi), aided by papal corruption (as well as the unbelief of certain humanists), and later condemned by the Lateran Council in a last-ditch attempt to renew Catholic doctrine (*Historia philosophica*, p. 306). However, it was the Reformation that brought the revival of Western philosophy to new heights by anchoring philosophy to the revelations of the Scriptures. Hornius claimed that Protestant thinkers were a reference point for the immense variety of speculative currents that appeared in the sixteenth century, following a great leap forward in European culture (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 314–16). Indeed, there was not only a rebirth of ancient philosophies with the attempt at a syncretistic approach (Pico, Rudolf Göckel), but new philosophies had been born such as those of the alchemists, the Ramists, the Anabaptists, and the Machiavellians.

It is interesting to note that in Bk. vi, in which he analysed Western thought during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Hornius dedicated ch. 7 to Chinese philosophy. His decision to discuss the subject at this stage was not accidental. He believed that Columbus' voyage and the exploration of the Far East were made possible only by the enormous contributions to science and nautical technology made during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It thus became possible to know the Chinese and Japanese philosophies, whose origins were extremely ancient and which had reached extremely advanced positions on both moral and political matters. In a way, these philosophies were an achievement of Renaissance thought which had retrieved the wisdom of Confucius and re-established contacts with Eastern culture for the first time since the fall of the Roman Empire. Hornius appears to be convinced, on the basis of the first-hand information he had gleaned from the Dutch ambassadors' report that he had translated, that Chinese and Japanese philosophers had developed the same line of research into divine wisdom that distinguished the greater part of Christian philosophy in the West (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 308–11).

3.4.3. The periodization of the *Historia philosophica* appears to have been based on a number of theories of interpretation. Bk. i and Bk. vi attempt to clarify the most important of these. At the beginning, Hornius outlines the problems concerning the origin of the term 'philosophy'. He concludes with a survey of all the material that he has examined, and analyses the main structures of philosophical activity through history. If we look at this last part of the *Historia philosophica*, in which he sums up the material that he has analysed in the first six books within broad historical categories, we find not only a mass of data, a review of philosophical curiosities, as is sometimes implied by Hornius himself ("but let us now gather together the spoils, and if any of them have so far been left unsaid by us, they will pass away unregarded"; *Historia philosophica*, p. 325), but above all an enumeration of

the varieties of philosophical experience, seen as a contribution to the study and interpretation of wisdom. Indeed the work's fundamental thesis is clarified by this review of philosophy based not on chronology but on the situations and environments in which the philosophies were created. Philosophy's various historical forms indicate for Hornius the possibility of calling 'philosophical' all human experience that has searched for natural and divine wisdom, sometimes attaining it, sometimes distorting it.

Hornius starts his demonstration with the *nomina philosophorum* — all the expressions used to define those who have searched for wisdom (e.g., *magi, sapientes, philosophi, brachmanas, gymnosopistae, sacerdotes, sophistae, prophetae, doctores, magistri*: *Historia philosophica*, Bk. VI, ch. 1, pp. 325–32; it should be remembered that Brucker was to use a similar method in his 'Dissertatio preliminaris', pp. 4–5). He then listed the *ratio propagandi philosophiam* used by philosophers of the different peoples to hand down their doctrines (*memoria, scriptura*, oral tradition in the more inward-looking schools like the Pythagoreans: ch. 2, pp. 332–6), and the *loca philosophandi*, listing the favourite places for philosophical speculation (*urbes, deserta, montes, Academia, Lycaeum, stoa, horti, bibliotheca, gymnasia*: ch. 3, pp. 336–46).

From the beginning of history, the search for wisdom was carried out by philosophers who reached intellectual maturity after a long apprenticeship in a school (ch. 4, pp. 346–8). In the ancient period, philosophical method varied between the personal relationship of the teacher-disciple dialogue to the recital of impenetrable *placita* or initiation procedures consisting of, for example, complicated forms of writing such as Egyptian hieroglyphics (chs. 5–6, pp. 349–55). Hornius also went into some detail about the methods used in more recent times and discussed the *carmina* of the Greek poet-philosophers, the literary compositions and the eloquence of classical Greece and Rome (ch. 7, pp. 355–60), Socrates' dialogic style adopted in Plato's writings and the ensuing dialogic tradition in the Platonic school (ch. 8, pp. 360–62), the twin acroamatic (designed for hearing only) and esoteric procedure of the Aristotelian school (ch. 9, pp. 362–3), the Stoics' dialectic disputations and the Epicureans' rigid adherence to *verba magistri* (ch. 10, pp. 364–5), and the Academicians' disputations based on doubt (ch. 11, pp. 365–8).

After this description of the *modus philosophandi*, Hornius went on to consider the *mores sectarum*, the particular customs of the various philosophical sects. He dealt in some depth with the Greek sects that attempted to assert the primacy of their particular style over all other forms of thought (*Heraclitici, aenigmatici, and Pythagoraei symbolici*: ch. 12, pp. 368–76). He then looked at the more external aspects of philosophical sects, the means by which they attempted to distinguish themselves: dress, demeanour, gestures, listing these as *sectarum discrimina* (ch. 13, pp. 376–81). He also described the philosophers' style and its influence on their disciples ("copious Plato", "strict

Aristotle", "the subtle Stoics", "the casual (*neglegentes*) Epicureans": ch. 14, pp. 381-3). In the final two chapters of Bk. VII, he reviewed the financial situation of the philosophers (often extremely precarious, because of the very nature of philosophical freedom: ch. 15, pp. 383-5) and the *gradus*, the status and power enjoyed by philosophers in the cultures in which they lived (an interesting reference is made here to the power of philosophers in China, which was maintained by a rigorous meritocratic system of examinations: ch. 16, pp. 385-7).

This analysis demonstrated the wide variety of philosophies and the many ways in which wise men had been treated. This confirmed Hornius' theory that there was no clear separation between wisdom and philosophy, since the quest for knowledge was the reference point for both — although philosophers might have been trying to distinguish themselves from wise men for their own convenience. He, therefore, implicitly rejected the idea that philosophy was a superior form of knowledge to wisdom, that the former was more rigorous and more independent in its use of reason, when compared with the latter. Philosophy had existed ever since wisdom had been created and instilled in mankind. There was no point in searching for the origins of philosophy, as these coincided with the origins of mankind. It was not important that the philosophy of Adam and his descendants was technically imperfect or lacked a system; the essential point, for Hornius, was that natural wisdom was sought and partially acquired, or rather conserved with great difficulty, by the instinctive forms that then took the place of rational formulations. Greek thought should not be treated as a special case: philosophy developed amongst all peoples that had sought the truth. Consequently, the history of philosophy was as interested in barbarian thought as it was in Greek thought. The periodization clearly showed that Hornius dealt simultaneously with Greek, Oriental, and barbarian thought, and then with Western and Oriental Christian, Arab, and Jewish thought.

When explaining ancient philosophy, Hornius brings together the myths and beliefs that were mere scraps of the wisdom that had been lost in Adam's fall. No people on Earth were able to avoid the barbarity and ignorance that followed the banishment from the Earthly Paradise. In these conditions, religious and cosmological beliefs were aberrant and inadequate for true wisdom. However, Adam's descendants were able to make use of the "glimmers" (*scintillae*) and "broken stones" (*rudera*) of wisdom that remained in their hearts and start their difficult and painful philosophical journey (*Historia philosophica*, p. 52).

Hornius felt that it was worth while explaining what each people understood by godhead and what the relationship between the various divinities had been. This comparison between different perceptions of the gods (Greek, Egyptian, Chaldean, Indian, Latin, Celtic, etc.) helped to focus on mankind's anguish over a truth it could barely glimpse. Taking classical

Greek myths (Jupiter, Mercury, Apollo, Pallas, Ceres) as his example, Hornius proceeded to examine their meaning in the search for the lost wisdom. He concluded that there had been a monotheistic core hidden within mythological polytheism. Often a people would attribute a leading role to one of the gods, effectively making it the matrix of the others (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 44–6). These mythical-religious developments were therefore not without foundation and attained a certain wisdom, albeit in a distorted form.

Hornius then puts forward another theory, which partly concerns the positions of the Church Fathers and early Christian apologists: pagan deities were not pure invention but transfigurations of real people involved in the search for knowledge, who sometimes possessed demonic characteristics. Indeed, ancient pagan philosophy ended up also attaining an inverted wisdom; that is to say, it looked for knowledge in the principle of evil, in the devil, instead of searching for it in God. Evil knowledge derived from the school of Cain (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 48–52). Hornius accepted the patristic tradition for the sake of historical completeness; since it had not been possible for the men of the earliest times (let us not forget that in his *Disseratio de vera aetate mundi* Hornius studied in depth the problems of chronology in his time) to have fallen into error for no reason, therefore two possibilities must be considered: either wisdom had been imperfectly and imprecisely attained in confused ideas about divinity with polytheistic results, or wisdom had been sought in the wrong direction under the influence of demonic temptation. Hornius had no doubts about the latter; as a historian, he was concerned with avoiding pure fantasy and discovering philologically reliable sources that demonstrated the influence of the devil in the formation of philosophy. He found accounts of this in the Bible and in writings of the Church Fathers.

According to Hornius, philosophy in the most ancient times fell somewhere between the search for wisdom and the adherence to unwisdom, that is to deceit and error. Abel and Cain represented these two tendencies, and the latter was the inventor of 'sophistry', the confusion of truth. All successive philosophy derived from Adam's sons, and would range between adherence to the truth in its ancient derivations (wisdom) and its abandonment in favour of vain and misleading arguments (sophistry) (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 57–8). The school of Cain was destroyed by the Flood. Noah refounded true philosophy, which began to spread to all peoples from Armenia where the Ark came ashore to Latium itself in the person of Janus (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 60–64). The new philosophy was embraced everywhere and gave rise to different philosophical methods. It was initially divided among Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who travelled to three parts of the world, and then there was further subdivision amongst the various peoples that descended from them. The Chaldeans were the first civilization

that demonstrated ability in the search for truth, and they were primarily interested in the study of magic and the heavens (Zoroaster). Then came the Egyptian civilization, which vied with the Chaldeans for the leadership in philosophical investigation and claimed to have created its own kind of learning through Hermes Trismegistus. Although scholars challenged the identity of this man and his writings, they still represented for Hornius a symbol of a wisdom both original and profound (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 89-91). The Ethiopians were instructed by the impious Ham in a philosophy that led to the corruption of the wisdom of other peoples. Ham resumed the sinister philosophy of Cain's followers, who denied divine providence and the immortality of the soul and practised black magic (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 99-104).

These conflicting events in the search for truth also involved the inhabitants of India, with the philosophies of the Brahmins, Gymnosophists, and Calanus. The patriarch Abraham managed to escape from the darkness of the "crooked philosophy" because, although originally basing his knowledge on the Chaldean and Egyptian doctrines, he was called by God to the true philosophy, and "out of the Magus was made the Hebrew, the Christian philosopher, the scholar of sacred wisdom". For Hornius, Abraham's destiny was proof of the existence of divine providence, which on occasion inspired those people who "after rejecting the errors of the profane would zealously undertake the renewal of the image of God, and likewise of wisdom" (*Historia philosophica*, p. 112). Abraham was the greatest of those who recovered the true wisdom. Many years later Moses came and founded the cult of the one God and what can properly be called philosophy, which spread true wisdom amongst all peoples. Moses was considered a magician by pagan peoples because of the perfection of his doctrines. He was remembered in Greece as the mythical figure of Musaeus, and in Egypt as Hermes Trismegistus (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 128-9). Hornius further developed this theory, which had wide currency in sixteenth-century historiography, for example in his *Disseratio de vera aetate mundi*.

The Greek people did not want to acknowledge their debt to the Orient and proclaimed the originality of their philosophy, which supposedly owed nothing to external influences. Hornius rejected this theory and cited the accounts of Plato, Justin Martyr, Manetho, Diogenes Laertius, and Eusebius. It was not difficult for him to show that all the Oriental doctrines, both those that searched for true wisdom and those concerned only with the vanity and confusion of disputations, spread to Greece. This led to his thesis that at the very time some of Greek philosophy's greatest achievements were taking place it was creating the conditions for its eventual demise. The heroic age of Greek thought created magnificent works affirming the force of the will and the intellect. The theological or mystical age demonstrated its *suavitas*, its ability to develop generous and profound visions of the human

and the divine (especially in the case of Homer and Hesiod). However these characteristics contained the danger of obscurity; as a result, along with the splendour of the doctrines of these poet-theologians, their images were dispersed (*Historia philosophica*, p. 156).

In the period of philosophy properly so called, Greek thought included the work and the reflections of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, and through them it achieved *subtilitas*. The Seven Wise Men meditated on both divine matters and moral and political rules, attempting to create a comprehensive system. After the Wise Men, knowledge was splintered amongst the philosophical sects. Thus, according to Hornius, the perfect balance between knowledge and political life, so propitious to Greek thought, also created a frenetic desire for new knowledge, which degenerated into *licentia*. This led directly to the creation of sects and the abandonment of a collective search for a single body of wisdom (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 169–70). Hornius therefore rejected the idea that the sect gave clarity to the history of philosophy. Unlike Vossius, who centred his study of Greek thought on the *sectae philosophorum*, he believed that a history of Greek philosophy had to distinguish clearly between the unitary philosophy carried out by philosophers dedicated to the search for wisdom and the dispersive effect of the sects involved in their search for purposeless novelty.

For this reason, Hornius gave only limited coverage to the sects; this is particularly striking because of the amount of source material available about sectarian philosophy. He was not particularly interested in the relationships between different philosophers; he put Anaximander, Heraclitus, Democritus, and Protagoras all together in the more ancient Ionic sect (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 181–3), and he included Pythagoras, Archytas, Philolaus, and Parmenides in the Italic sect (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 179–80). He had no interest in studying the ‘succession’ in which the philosophers came, nor in their personalities — contrary to what the title of his work implied. He limited himself to referring to the various historical sources that throw light on the sects, and paid more attention to those thinkers whose studies transcended the confines of their sect in a wider search for wisdom: Pythagoras for his many links with Oriental doctrines and his understanding of the real relationship between philosophy and true wisdom (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 174–8), Plato for his frequent references to Phoenician thought (and only indirectly to Moses, who incidentally he never made use of in the formulation of his doctrines) and his sincere search for the divine, which continued throughout his entire life (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 189–93), and Aristotle for the systematization of philosophy, which practically put him outside the logic of the sects and made him the inspiration of so many philosophical movements (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 194–6).

While these great philosophers knew how to escape the dominance of the sects by indicating different routes to the same wisdom, their followers

forced their masters' doctrines back into fetters, and often failed to recognize their true nature. The history of the Academy supplied many clear examples of this, when it lost the Platonic zeal for divine wisdom in its developed doctrines, which actually came close to Scepticism ("the doctrine of Plato has been obscured, and his integrity has been almost extinguished along with the author himself; his successors soon filled his school with new opinions" *Historia philosophica*, p. 156; also pp. 217-21). The Peripatetic sect was another case in point: after Theophrastus it actually forgot the existence of Aristotle's works, allowing them to be lost (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 195-6).

Hornius was careful not to suggest that one sect was more responsible than the rest for the philosophical renewal in modern times, nor was he concerned with any effort of an eclectic nature. What did interest him was the overall destiny of Greek thought, which could only be admired for its *subtilitas*, but which also had to be considered with a very critical eye because it had developed so many vain conclusions. The variety of the sects led to a rich intellectual development, but also to decadence. The Stoics and the Epicureans, as well as the minor sects such as the Cynics and the Sceptics, were all examples of this. Hornius reaffirmed the position taken by Clement of Alexandria in his *Stromata*, that it was no coincidence that the Stoics joined up with the Epicureans ("both of which were then teaching particularly absurd things"; *Historia philosophica*, p. 201). Greek thought ended with tireless disputes between the leading schools and with the advent of Scepticism. Potamon attempted to check this tendency through Eclecticism, but without immediate success because Potamon attempted to accept the great variety of sects (*Historia philosophica*, p. 222).

Eclecticism could really succeed only with the advent of Christian thought, which transcended the logic of sectarianism. The philosophies that developed amongst other peoples at the same time as this flowering of the Greek civilization were unable to achieve advances in wisdom that were both authentic and of a suitable conceptual standard. The Jewish philosophers were divided into sects, and were influenced by the superstitions of adjoining peoples (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 227-32). The Romans, whose original world-view was to be greatly valued for its concept of wisdom as *mens* (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 235-6), ended up assimilating Greek thought with its sectarian divisions, eventually leading to the synthetic philosophy of Cicero (who is much praised by Hornius: *Historia philosophica*, pp. 247-50). The thinkers that lived at the time of the Roman emperors (with the exception of Seneca) descended to a very low level, because of their inability to conceive a philosophy that was both alive and appropriate, and because of their acquiescence in tyranny (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 252-60). Only with the advent of Christ was the world able to return to the natural wisdom that had been lost by Adam and restore the genuine search for truth. Hornius considered the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem, having been guided by the

star, to be a sign of this fact and proof of the reinstatement of a wisdom so highly valued in the East (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 264–6).

Hornius resolved the historical problem of the relationship between Greek thought and Christian doctrine after the apostolic period by denying that the former had a decisive influence on the latter. Indeed, philosophy inspired by Christianity had no need for the speculations of pagan philosophy, since Christianity represented the restoration of true wisdom. If there was any influence, in particular of Platonism, on the ideas of the Apologists and Church Fathers, then it only interfered with the purity of Christian doctrines (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 270–71). The very heresies that sprang up within the Church in the early centuries owed their existence to these intrusions, which led some Christian thinkers to consider possible a wisdom that linked the word of Christ to a fantastic synthesis of ideas (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 279–80). In any case, pagan thought soon rejected compromise with the new and growing Christian philosophy and “after rejecting the idle and useless philosophy that had already occupied the Greeks for many centuries like a noxious illness, they began to bring to light again the *prisca theologia*, which had been as if lifeless for a long time” (*Historia philosophica*, p. 272). In Hornius’ opinion, pagan thought realized that it needed to counter a vibrant and unified body of thought with something that was equally strong, and philosophers considered it essential to refer back to beliefs that preceded Greek thought.

Hornius found it extremely interesting that at a crucial historical moment the Greek philosophers overcame their sectarian divisions in the name of the unity of wisdom. This demonstrated that the history of philosophy was a question of the acceptance or rejection of wisdom, and that there is no basis to Braun’s interpretation (pp. 66–7) that the author held a syncretic view, by which every philosophy contributes to producing a harmony between philosophies. The way in which the *Historia philosophica* contrasts pagan and Christian philosophy in the early centuries of Christianity, instead of showing a harmonious meeting of positions, reveals a merciless struggle for the victory of one philosophical and theological system over the other. In this view, the pagan philosophers were aiming to counter the Christian system of religious beliefs with another system also intended to be religious. This they did by unifying the different polytheistic views that had existed at the beginning of history, but Hornius believed these beliefs to be false even though they had been the fruit of a genuine attempt to arrive at wisdom. Hornius decisively rejected the historical view of the Florentine Platonists and the ‘concordists’. He did not see any continuity between pagan and Christian thought, as the former was fragmented, in spite of every effort to create unity. Every time there was an attempt to create a syncretic system, it ended up countering Christian divinity with false divinity, demonic cults, and defamatory arguments (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 272–4).

The guiding thread of Hornius' thesis on Christian knowledge becomes lost in the account of the barbarian invasions of the Christian West, which smothered all culture. He claimed that philosophy too suffered from this eclipse, but this contradicted the assertion frequently made in the *Historia philosophica* that philosophy has no need of a conceptual apparatus or a refined cultural environment in order to be able to express itself. Furthermore, the Renaissance of humanist culture in the fifteenth century, brought about by the arrival of Greek scholars in Italy, was the direct cause of the rebirth of authentic philosophy (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 272-4). This can only mean that Hornius acknowledged the link between the philosophical renewal of the Christian West and the renewed knowledge of Graeco-Roman thought, although he perhaps did so unconsciously. There may, however, be different reasons for this interpretation, which contradicted his basic thesis on the limitations of classical thought. It is clear that as a historian and a humanist Hornius was interested in showing that it was the fifteenth century that led to the philosophical Renaissance after the stagnation of the Middle Ages. It is also clear that, as a Protestant, he saw the fifteenth century as the rebirth of true religious philosophy, in which the chains of Scholasticism had been shaken off by the renewal of philological criticism in the Renaissance and philosophers claimed the right to work differently, with greater introspection and greater freedom.

Hornius did not perceive the humanistic restoration of classical philosophy as a return to sectarian thought. On the contrary, he considered the general movement of spiritual renewal to be a unifying factor, whose nucleus consisted of a system of religious beliefs. He could not see any contradiction in his position. For example, he considered the philosophy that continued to be practised in Byzantium after the fall of the Roman Empire of the West to be sterile (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 282-3), and then he gave its exponents who arrived in Italy in the fifteenth century all the credit for the humanist and philosophical renewal. While he attributed this renewal of Christian thought to factors outside the West, he admitted that medieval Christian thought, dominated by Scholasticism, had linked philosophical and theological investigation closely together (*Historia philosophica*, p. 296). In reality, he did not want to recognize that Scholasticism achieved anything other than the conservation of the Church's dogma. He was therefore obliged to claim the originality of the religious ideas created by humanism and the Reformation and to trace the cause of renewal back to something other than Scholasticism. At the same time, however, he could not deny the importance of scholastic thought, at least in its mature stage, and above all he could not forget the renewal brought about by the Aristotelian 'system'. Thus he had to compromise and view Greek culture as a catalyst in the creation of forces that the Christian West had already developed independently. Equally he had to admit that the rebirth of classical thought led to the reappearance of

sects, albeit with the corrective of humanistic and concordistic tendencies (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 311–12).

He concluded this review of philosophical events with the sixteenth century and continued in his erratic interpretations. Hornius stated that philosophy could not have any real meaning if not enlightened by the Scriptures (“the world would have advanced little in wisdom, if the light of the Gospel had not been added to the study of letters”; *Historia philosophica*, p. 296), and therefore Aristotelianism had been rejected by those who, like Luther, had the interests of true philosophy at heart. In Spain and Italy, on the other hand, Catholics had brought Aristotle back into fashion and defended him with vain and difficult commentaries. This demonstrated that authentic philosophical speculation could only take place if it avoided sectarianism and became the direct instrument of study of revealed religious truth, without any intermediaries. But having said this, Hornius then referred to the moderate Aristotelian Philip Melancthon as the example of a true *instaurator* of the new philosophy in Germany. He did not therefore reject all classical thought in favour of a purely evangelical philosophy, but, very much in the humanistic tradition, he felt that it was possible to reconcile the liberal arts with the best philosophy and the Scriptures. Sectarianism could thus be avoided.

3.4.4. Hornius developed his arguments in the *Historia philosophica* in very much the same way as he did in his other works dedicated to cultural and spiritual history. *De originibus americanis*, which is a significant example of his method, attempts to show that the populations inhabiting the Americas originated from Europe and Asia (the Cantabrians, the Phoenicians, the Chinese, the Huns). This work is also divided into books and chapters, and the chapters have a structure similar to those in the *Historia philosophica*. The chapters simply discuss a thesis with the aid of various sources and historical accounts; they develop each argument and consolidate the main theses. Although it is less noticeable, just this procedure is used in the *Historia philosophica*, where the underlying theses are developed according to a fairly well-ordered argumentation. It appears that the chapters are ordered only on a chronological and geographical basis, but in reality Hornius constructed a subtle argumentation in the different chapters, and at the end of each book the reader is led to conclusions already outlined. The best demonstration of this structure is his synchronic description of the philosophies of different peoples. This brings together the philosophies that appeared in each given period and draws comparisons between them. It demonstrates the level of agreement between peoples and civilizations about the fundamental stages in the search for wisdom. Hornius did not believe that philosophy developed at the same rate in all civilizations, nor that they shared the same doctrines; he wished to identify the common evolution in the acquisition of knowledge.

The philological apparatus used by Hornius is aimed at demonstrating the

basic theses; the wide use of quotations is employed to mimic the existence of clear statements that connect the data given in the various chapters. However this does lead to a certain hastiness when interpreting passages and explaining terminology. Hornius' claim that the Phoenician word *sufes* was the origin of the Greek Σοφός is a typical example of this aspect of his work. As Heumann also pointed out (Vol. 1, pp. 1046–7), the countless inaccuracies and hurried assertions in the *Historia philosophica* demonstrate not so much a lack of philological preparation as a certain superficiality in the planning of the work. Indeed, Hornius introduced his work as a survey designed to show that a history of philosophy could be written, but he did not pretend to write a complete history itself.

This does not mean, however, that the author simply improvised or accepted every source he came across as valid. He did not abandon those critical methods developed in the fifteenth century, which Hornius believed had broken with the last vestiges of Scholasticism and returned to genuine wisdom. He was convinced that the history of philosophy must involve itself in the analysis of textual data to avoid undue exaggeration. In the course of expounding philosophical positions and facts, he often interjected comments to rectify or to clarify that he was not prepared to credit completely this or that fact. For example, he rejected the "ancient opinion, long held by many", that Plato used Moses as the source for many of his doctrines and referred to them in his works. There was no proof that Plato knew Hebrew, or that he had assimilated Moses' thought; historical circumstances indicated quite the opposite, that the Greeks were unfamiliar with Jewish thought (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 190–91).

Hornius was well aware that Dionysius the Areopagite was not the author of the works attributed to him by classical and medieval tradition, and explained that he continued to use the name purely for convenience (*Historia philosophica*, p. 270). Equally, he was quick to point out that while he was obliged to recount the myths and legends of ancient civilizations very precisely, this did not imply his agreement with their content.

Hornius referred as often in the *Historia philosophica* to the Scriptures and the Church Fathers as he did to classical sources, and he did not find it difficult to reconcile sacred and classical texts, thanks to the prudent and scientific attitude that he adopted for all the texts he looked at. The discussion revolves around the texts and quotations, and does not attempt to go any further. Pagan religious beliefs are constantly compared with biblical accounts in order to obtain a coherent and concordant view. Biblical passages are 'rationalized' and 'historicized' by reference to other sources, which are used for verification. Hornius did not pronounce on the validity of different pagan and Jewish beliefs. He believed that it was his task to present the texts that expound these beliefs, and to eliminate forced interpretations and interpolations in the reading of those texts.

For instance, Hornius discussed the various positions taken by his sources and historians on Zoroaster. He did not question the existence of this historical character, because many sources led him to conclude that there must have been at least one Zoroaster (as he pointed out, there might have been more than one). He also had no doubt that Zoroaster's works had existed, but believed that the *Chaldean Oracles* attributed to him were in fact the work of a semi-Christian Greek commenting on ancient writings. Hornius stated that philological criticism did not allow certain writings to be attributed to their mythical authors (this was also the case for the *corpus Hermeticum*, the Sibylline oracles, etc.); but he did not think it could be denied that such very ancient texts had existed (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 78-9).

According to Hornius, the existence of the historical characters and wise men discussed in ancient and Christian literature could only be denied through the analysis of the historical accounts. If there were uncertainties or inconsistencies, it was necessary to find the reasons for these difficulties in handing down historical records. The mythical character of some of the accounts did not exclude them, but should encourage a deeper investigation of their real meaning. For this reason, Hornius often protected himself by putting forward only tentative interpretations, which indicated the uncertainty of the sources referred to and the impossibility of further historical analysis. If he found a lack of historical evidence, he tended to supply the information, which might have been doubtful, but which at least partly filled a gap in knowledge and which might point to interpretations, however hypothetical. For example, in the case of the biblical account of how Noah gave philosophical direction to his sons, Hornius did not try to verify its historical authenticity, but simply considered it the most likely version of events. He just corrected the tradition about Noah's sons going out into the world, claiming that it was their descendants who migrated, thus using Noah and his descendants to explain the diversification of philosophical experiences. The discussion of Shem, Ham, and Japheth also allowed him to link the Scriptures with classical sources of ancient Greek myths (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 64-6). Without asking himself exactly how important these myths are, Hornius managed to show that there was agreement between the different versions held by ancient peoples on the spread of philosophical knowledge. This was very important for his theory that a search for wisdom was common to all ancient civilizations.

The *Historia philosophica* is neither a monument of erudition nor the beginning of critical history. It is simply an attempt at a coherent presentation of the development of human thought in all its manifestations. In Bk. VII the author clarifies his intention, which is not purely historical and philological, and which is not at all aligned with the Eclectic approach to philosophy. The general review of philosophical activity intends to establish that a history should be neither a catalogue of accounts picked out at random

nor a too closely focused concentration on Greek philosophy, privileged on account of its systematic character. A true history of philosophy should accept all contributions to the search for wisdom, while at the same time pointing out which of those contributions actually achieved it, by what means and to what extent. When discussing, for instance, the *nomina philosophorum*, Hornius insists that the names most widely used to refer to those who lived as philosophers were all inspired by the concept of *sapientia* (*sapientes, doctores, magistri, prophetae*), while the name *sophistae* constantly held negative connotations (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 326–9).

In this context, it is understandable that Hornius preferred to refer to the sources rather than analyse the texts directly. He believed that examination of texts should be left to editors and writers of commentaries. The task of a history of philosophy was to summarize the lives of the philosophers, their historical circumstances, and their doctrines, in order to introduce the reader to the principal figures who had searched for or rejected the truth. All analysis should be restricted to the historical sources used, because they were what made it possible to judge the soundness of various interpretations that had been put forward. Analysis of the philosopher's text would not allow the same clarity in describing the stages and historical events leading to the acceptance of religious truth.

The summaries in Bk. vii provide further examples of this approach. Various aspects of philosophical activity are approached through a detailed analysis of all the historical accounts and all the texts, whether poetic, historical, or religious, that deal even remotely with the status of philosophers. There is no analysis of the 'scientific' structure or systematic form of the differing philosophical schools. Hornius had no intention of entering into the finer doctrinal questions, but simply wished to investigate the external circumstances that governed their existence. Thus, for example, he reviewed all the methods of setting out philosophical meditations, without attempting to relate the doctrine to the method of study. He referred only briefly to the question of which philosophical premise was used, although he did mention the significant contribution to mathematics of the Platonic Academy (*Historia philosophica*, p. 367). Equally we come across very few examples of doctrinal analysis in the first six books. Succinct in describing exactly what distinguishes one philosophy from another, he concentrates more on the style of a philosophy than its content. Equally he concentrates on the spread of doctrines, the problems they encountered, their practical results, and their socio-political positions, rather than on their structures or the *placita* that could be derived from them. For example he devotes Bk. iii, ch. 19, to the spread of Greek thought outside Greece (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 212–17), and Bk. v, ch. 4, to the way in which Christianity spread throughout the classical world (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 269–72); he describes the disastrous consequences of the doctrines of Cain and his followers (*Historia*

philosophica, pp. 49-59, 99-101) and illustrates the atheistic theories and the rejection of the soul's immortality that sprang from Renaissance Aristotelianism and the ideas of Machiavelli, while hardly mentioning the arguments adopted by these doctrines (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 312-14).

3.5. The *Historia philosophica* was not highly regarded by later historians. It was used here and there, sometimes quite extensively (as in the case of Cozzandus' *De magistero antiquorum philosophorum*), but it had no decisive influence. The main reasons for this were the unreliability of some parts of the work, the wordiness of others, and the general tone which, as we have already pointed out, lacked precision. Reservations about the claims and interpretations contained in the book are to be found in Launoy, *De varia Aristotelis fortuna in Academia parisiensi* (Wittenberg, 1720; pp. 339, 343-5, 353; the references were added to this edition); Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus* (Bk. 1, ch. 5, § 4, p. 4); and in several reviews: (? Gundling), 'Nachricht von den Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', *Neue Bibliothec*, 11 (1711), pp. 383-4; Stolle, pp. 421-44; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 154; and Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 35. However, these authors failed to notice the principal aspect of the work, which is the definite line of interpretation that emerges from the scholarly and historical apparatus. They are interested only in the *Historia philosophica's* errors of scholarship and textual interpretation.

Heumann's review (Vol. 1, pp. 1039-61), on the other hand, understood the advantages of the interpretation used in the *Historia philosophica*. Heumann was well aware of its considerable limitations from a historical and philological point of view, but he approved of the philosophical, and not merely scholarly, way in which Hornius had organized his material. Historical discussion was governed by a philosophical idea, and this made it an important work and unquestionably the first of its kind (pp. 1054-5). However, Heumann did not fully understand that Hornius' premise was both religious and philosophical, rather than exclusively philosophical. Thus he accused Hornius of wishing to change, like the mythical King Midas, every author he touched into a philosopher (p. 1051). It escaped his attention that Hornius attributed a religious connotation to the concept of wisdom, and therefore was inclined to consider all attempts to achieve wisdom as philosophy.

In any event, Heumann's review was unique in its even-handed appraisal of the *Historia philosophica*, which attracted little attention or thorough debate, because it did not contain a great store of information. Even members of the circles created around the Cambridge school failed to appreciate the theological interpretative theses, with the exception of Theophile Gale, who often mentioned the *Historia philosophica's* treatment of Jewish thought and Oriental philosophy. After the beginning of the eighteenth century the work fell into complete obscurity. By the time Brucker mentioned it in his 'Disser-

tatio praeliminaris' as one of the earliest examples of the genre, scholars were treating it as little more than a historical curiosity.

3.6. On his life, works and character:

Saxe, IV, p. 513; Jöcher, II, coll. 1708-9; BUAM Vol., XIX, pp. 640-41; M. Siegenbeek, *Geschiedenis der Leidsche Hoogeschool* (Leiden, 1829), Vol. I, p. 170; Vol. II, p. 133; Van Der Aa, VI, pp. 392-3; I. Schmitz-Auerbach, G. H., *ein deutscher Geschichtsschreiber: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Historiographie des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Karlsruhe, 1880; extracted from *Karlsruher Gymnasialprogramm*); id., s.v. 'Horn, G.', in ADB, XIII, pp. 137-8; Fueter, p. 242; Meijer, *Kritiek aals herwaadering: Het levenswerk van Jacob Perizonius*, pp. 181-2; G. Falco, *La polemica sul medioevo* (n. ed.; Naples, 1974), pp. 102-4; G. Gliozzi, *Adamo e il nuovo mondo: La nascita dell'antropologia come ideologia coloniale: dalle genealogie bibliche alle teorie razziali (1500-1700)* (Florence, 1977), pp. 497-506; P. Rossi, *I segni del tempo: Storia della terra e storia delle nazioni da Hooke a Vico* (Milan, 1979), pp. 174-81.

On the reception of the work in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

'Nachricht von der Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', NB, II (1711), pp. 383-4; Morhof, *Polybistor philosophicus*, Vol. I, ch. I, § 5, p. 4; Heumann, Vol. I, pp. 1039-61; C. Sagittarius, *Introductio in historiam ecclesiasticam* (Jena, 1718), Vol. I, pp. 197-9, 354-5; Stolle, pp. 421-2; J. B. Mencke and F. O. Mencke, *Bibliotheca virorum militiae aequae ac scriptis illustrium* (Leipzig, 1734), pp. 238-41; J. A. Flessa, *Dissertatio de vita G. H.* (Bayeruth, 1738); Brucker, Vol. I, p. 35.

On the historiography of philosophy:

Rak, pp. 70-84; Braun, pp. 65-7; Malusa, 'Origini', pp. 27-9; Del Torre, pp. 25-9.

4. ABRAHAM DE GRAU (1632-1683)

Specimina philosophiae veteris *Historia philosophica*

4.1. Abraham de Grau (Gravius) was born on 14 August 1632 in Wanswerd, Frisia. He completed his secondary education at the grammar school in Leeuwarden, the main city in Frisia, and enrolled at the University of Franeker in 1651, later transferring to the University of Groningen to complete his theological studies under the Cartesian philosophy teacher Tobias Andreae (Tobie d'André), where he combined a considerable passion for languages and the classics with the study of mathematics and philosophy. When his ex-teacher, the mathematician Bernhard Fullenius, died in 1659, he was asked to take up his master's chair at the University of Franeker, which made him a doctor of philosophy in September 1659. Because of his aptitude for philosophy, he was given permission to teach the subject, although the courses were considered unofficial. After his works on the history of philosophy had made him famous, he hoped to get the chair in

philosophy — an ambition he never achieved. In 1674, when the academic authorities appointed Johannes Wubben, whose candidacy had been strongly opposed by de Grau, he was prohibited from teaching the same subject as his new colleague, and was not allowed to resume his philosophical courses until 1680. He died of a sudden illness on 8 September 1683.

4.2. Abraham de Grau left no published work on mathematics except his inaugural address, held on 6 June 1659, *De usu et praestantia Matheseos*. The only works he published were on the history of philosophy: *Specimina philosophiae veteris, in qua novae quaedam ostenduntur* (Franeker, 1673) and *Historia philosophica, continens veterum philosophorum qui quidem praecipui fuerunt, studia ac dogmata, modernorum quaestionibus in primis exagitata* (Franeker, 1674). These two volumes are the result of the same effort, but were written for different purposes. The *Specimina* was a polemical work, a manifesto for his philosophical ideas and methodological positions in the field of scholarly research, while the *Historia philosophica* was didactic and set out his ideas on the *veteres* through a learned presentation of ancient philosophy.

4.3. The premises that de Grau developed around the concept of *historia philosophica* are of considerable interest if we are to grasp the achievements of Dutch culture in the historiography of philosophy. In the 'Praefatio' to the *Specimina philosophiae veteris*, he clarified what he meant by 'ancient' philosophy and by 'modern' philosophy. His starting point was the great success of Cartesian thought in the Dutch universities. Challenging the presentation of Cartesian philosophy as something completely new, he put forward his own way of relating ancient philosophies to current ones. Because de Grau had literary and philosophical interests as well as his official mathematical courses (his teaching would also have included astronomy, geometry, rational mechanics), he was able embrace the problems of ancient thought as handed down by Diogenes Laertius, Cicero, Augustine, and others, as well as the philosophical debates of his own time and country, which pitted Cartesians against Peripatetics — the defenders of traditional philosophy.

De Grau had considerable doubts over the current description of Cartesian thought as modern and Aristotelian thought as ancient, and thought that there was a lack of recognition of the breadth of what the *philosophia veterum* actually said. He believed the Cartesians were wrong to view the method of doubt as the great innovation of the modern age, which had freed philosophy from the chains of tradition and ignorance. He maintained that they had not realized that ancient thought had developed countless theories on doubt and discussed philosophical method extensively. The Cartesians' position on the mind was directly opposed to traditional philosophy. They were preoccupied with the clarification of their rationalistic innovations, and consequently had only contempt for the study of the classical texts that might contribute to the liberation of the mind ("by which minds are shaped in no small way for learning; they receive brilliance and strength"). This

endangered the study of classical thought, and the methods employed in its interpretation could no longer be used. The freedom of philosophical activity was implicitly denied by their very insistence on accepting only those positions put forward by Descartes (*Specimina*, 'Praefatio', pp. [2-3]).

The Peripatetics, on the other hand, spoke of Aristotelian philosophy as the true philosophy, as the authentic voice of classical thought; but in reality they were ignorant of Greek and Latin philosophy and did not even know the Greek language in which Plato and Aristotle both wrote. The way they presented Aristotle's ideas demonstrated that they did not understand them, and they were even less capable of understanding Plato. As a consequence they could not dispassionately draw a comparison between classical thought and new philosophical theories — they ended up corrupting the sense of the philosophers with their inappropriate analyses. For de Grau, the *formamentis* of the Peripatetics was one of intolerance both towards new ideas (they accused Cartesian philosophy of being "damnable and heretical") and towards the true philosophical tradition, which embraced the entire history of classical thought. These Aristotelians were incapable of philosophical study because they had confused metaphysics with logic, and held a view of the world that was barely more sophisticated than "the elementary knowledge of the common people (*vulgi rudimenta*)"; in spite of this, they claimed the title of the true "scholars of wisdom". This intolerance led to a dangerous lack of historical learning (*Specimina*, 'Praefatio', pp. 3-4).

Faced with the intolerance of the two opposing camps, the task of the scholar was to rescue classical philosophy and demonstrate that the accusations that the *novatores* levied against it were unfounded and that in reality Descartes and his followers were very much indebted to that philosophical tradition. De Grau saw the main role of historical study as 'theoretical'; indeed, scholarship had the special scope of enabling the improvement of an awareness of ancient thought that was indispensable for repulsing the attacks of the Cartesians. De Grau was convinced that modern thinkers had made considerable advances in science and rational investigations, and that they could not be ignored. From attentive contemplation of progress in mathematics, physics, and astronomy, he could not deny the superiority of the moderns. Yet he could not understand the attitude of rejection that united both the Peripatetics and the Cartesians with respect to the proper awareness of classical thought.

However, de Grau's position is not exclusively theoretical; he is not putting forward his own speculative ideas, nor does he seem to use the historical data in order to arrive at certain conclusions. His interest in the history of philosophy sprang from the desire to attain a correct understanding of nature, man's knowledge, and behaviour, to re-establish the truth about the history of the sects and their systems, which had been neglected by the *novatores*: "In this I have insisted upon vindicating the philosophy of the

ancients, mangled and ridiculed by modern sciolists, by means of the principal philosophers' sayings, which are frequently occupied with disputations, in so far as the truth handed down in them (*ibidem*) permits". De Grau sets this objective both for himself and for students of philosophy, whom he believed to be in need of freedom from prejudice if they were to be able to deepen their understanding of classical philosophy and broaden their view of what a philosopher and a philosophy were (*Historia philosophica*, 'Dedicatio curatoribus', p. [3]).

De Grau believed that the critical study of ancient, classical thought was quite enough for a broad understanding of philosophy's role, and that the problems of late antique, medieval, and Renaissance thought were not particularly relevant to contemporary studies and debates. Unlike Hornius, he considered the study of classical thought to be useful for the renewal of philosophy, because what it stated was still philosophically valid. He did not claim that the history of philosophy had passed through several centuries of stagnation, choosing to ignore the speculations of the Middle Ages. When he compared them to the ideas of Descartes and current scientific advances (Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo), the events of late classical and medieval thought seemed to lack importance. Indeed, in order to proceed to a harmonious interpenetration of classical thought with the new visions, both rationalistic and mechanical, of the world and man, de Grau thought it appropriate only to reinforce what the ancients had expressed that was philosophically valid.

The historical limitations of the work can therefore be explained in terms of the 'scholastic' evaluation of Cartesian thought that we also encountered in Heereboord's work. However, while the latter used the history of ancient and medieval thought in order both to propose the renewal of Aristotelianism and to support Cartesianism, de Grau believed that Aristotle's merits could be demonstrated by the description of classical thought alone and that the Cartesian position could be more easily understood if referred to the fundamental theses of Socrates, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and the Sceptics on such subjects as doubt, cognition of nature and ideas, and logic. De Grau considered as valid those positions of classical thought that were more relevant to his times, but, as we shall see, this did not mean that in writing his *Historia philosophica* he omitted any of the positions of the philosophers he dealt with. What it does mean, however, is that he concerned himself with classical thought in its totality, because it helped him to understand problems that came very close to the interests of modern thought.

De Grau seems to have been wholly preoccupied with the correct relationship between current problems and those in classical thought, maintaining that the new philosophers would be able to convince their own generation only if their philosophy could comprehend the true dimension of classical thought. He did not believe this would develop into a kind of scholasticism

that translated Cartesian thinking into systematic language that referred to the essential categories of Aristotelian thought. It would simply be a philosophy based on the parts of classical thought that continued to be relevant and those modern ideas that, whether consciously or not, were raising questions already posed and debated in classical times. His view was that the history of philosophy was the history of problems that had continued from ancient to modern times because of the forceful, systematic, and organic manner in which they were originally formulated.

The two historical works, which both appeared within a year, illustrate how de Grau became increasingly aware of the continuity between ancient and modern philosophy. In the *Specimina* he was interested in doubt as a method, and this led him to put forward his theory on the relevance of classical thought to contemporary society. The *Historia philosophica* constituted a further investigation of this theory and a clarification of the kind of continuity that existed between current problems and those discussed by the classical philosophical schools.

4.4. *Specimina philosophiae veteris*

4.4.1. The *Specimina philosophiae veteris* begins with a dedication to Isaac Schepper, the author's brother-in-law, and Gerbrand ab Ornia, a merchant from Amsterdam. The 'Praefatio ad lectorem' then follows, and it is here that de Grau sets out his views on historical and philosophical research. At the end of the introductory pages there is a poem by Isaac Schepper, significantly entitled 'In conciliationem veteris ac novae philosophiae', which is placed together with two other short poems (by B. Bekker) comparing the *vetus* and *nova philosophia*. The work itself is divided into 2 books, which consist of 12 chapters (pp. 1-139) and 26 chapters (pp. 139-368) respectively. The second book systematically develops theoretical questions, and is a succinct and subtle piece of scholarship, but is not intended to be a complete history of philosophy. This is confirmed by the outlines of the chapters, which seem brief when compared with the much longer synopses used in the *Historia philosophica*. At the end of the work there is an 'Index authorum', together with an 'Index vocum et phrasium graecarum quae citantur et explicantur' (pp. 370-79) and an 'Index rerum et verborum' (pp. 380-99). There is no table of contents.

4.4.2. According to de Grau, the theme of doubt first appeared in the history of classical philosophy with Socrates. Up to that time, one can only speak of "hesitation . . . impeding the search for truth" (*Specimina*, p. 5). Natural speculation had not allowed philosophers to make a clear approach to the question of doubt. Socrates used the method of doubt in discussion, and this was the origin of two different methods, one developed by Plato and the other by Aristotle. Plato perfected the use of doubt, and his school (Arcesilaus and Carneades) widened the use of this procedure, undermining thereby every certainty. At the same time the Sceptics put forward an equally

radical use of doubt. Aristotle, on the other hand, applied doubt within a logical framework and used it in the search for truth.

De Grau then jumps many centuries and proceeds to discuss Cartesian philosophy, ignoring both medieval thought and Renaissance scepticism. Descartes's positions are compared with those of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, the Sceptics, the Academics, and the Stoics. This comparison continues throughout the second book, which, although it appears to be a systematic review of theoretical questions arising from a consideration of the problem of doubt, regularly quotes from the philosophers discussed in the first book.

4.4.3. It becomes clear at once, even in the Dedication, that the main purpose of the *Specimina* is to reconcile the differing philosophies and to create a consensus between classical and modern philosophers ("I might also seem unusual in this, that I drive into consensus the minds of those philosophizing, divided up now into divergent paths through endless altercations", *Specimina*, 'Dedicatio', p. [2]). The central thesis of the work is that classical philosophy made constant methodological reference to the theme of doubt, the ancient world perceiving doubt as preparation for philosophical investigation. Doubt should not therefore be seen as the prerogative of the *philosophia nova*. De Grau considers doubt in ancient philosophy to be on exactly the same critical plane as in Cartesian doctrine, arguing that this had been the case from Socrates onwards. It could be seen from the structure of the Platonic dialogues, in which Socrates was the main character, that doubt was central to his philosophical method. Irony was based precisely on the methodological application of doubt in the course of discussion. The "confession of ignorance" was the beginning of progress towards doubt, which was then manifested by the "withholding of judgement . . . by which, through repeated questioning and investigating, and having confessed or rather pretended in an exaggerated manner his lack of knowledge, he attempted to discover something certain, especially in morals" (*Specimina*, pp. 17–18). Plato adopted Socrates' entire system and improved on it. He intended to turn doubt into a stage in the "discovery of truth" by ascertaining the various degrees of truth (*Specimina*, p. 24). The Platonic school puts doubt at the very centre of all its speculations, but to the detriment of the positive search for the truth. Arcesilaus claimed that everything was incomprehensible, nothing could be perceived, and one should reject every form of knowledge, believing that the most correct position to be held by a philosopher was that of "rejection of apprehension (*acatalexia*)" and "suspension of judgement (*epoche*)" (*Specimina*, pp. 28–30). Carneades admitted to the existence of truth but denied the possibility of finding the criteria by which to discern it, and confined the use of doubt to the assessment of the probability of certain statements (*Specimina*, pp. 33–7).

The philosophy of Pyrrho and his followers echoed these philosophers in

radical form. De Grau emphasizes that the Academics never arrived at the extreme positions of the Sceptics, and above all they never applied their scepticism to all aspects of life and science. The Sceptics claimed that every position can be countered by its negation. This led to a rigorous moral attitude that based the attainment of inner peace on the impossibility that one argument could prevail over any other (*Specimina*, pp. 40-47).

Aristotle represented a turning point in classical philosophy, because he brought the theme of doubt back to where it could make its greatest contribution — to the logic of disputation and confutation. He represented the major point of reference in the history of the idea of doubt. As the founder of logic, he embodied doubt in logical procedures and rescued it from the reputation it was acquiring in the Platonic school for radically challenging all knowledge. According to de Grau, what Aristotle meant by *aporein* was 'to doubt'; thus the use of doubt was required to start investigation and was closely linked to 'wonder (*admiratio*)' (*Specimina*, pp. 50-57). Doubt and admiration motivate the search for truth in the first place, and, in the second place, lead to the confutation of sophistry and to true explanation (*Specimina*, pp. 60-63).

What de Grau is referring to is *metaphysica dubitatio* (*Specimina*, p. 63). He believed that it was not possible to develop a scientific approach "except by doubting". Doubt created the field of study, and the study created the correct procedure. Aristotelian doubt was an integral part of method and reason. Its purpose was not, however, to undermine every certainty, but to constitute the first step in the process of discovering causes (*Specimina*, pp. 63-5). After having quoted sixteen examples of the use of doubt by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* III.1, he concludes: "It is most certainly evident that the judgement of Aristotle regards as an end the discovery of truth, i.e. certain knowledge, from an inquiry by means of doubt. When this is applied in metaphysics, it furnishes a more certain demonstration for the remaining functions of Philosophy, on which it depends" (*Specimina*, pp. 87-8). Many centuries later, the Cartesian method of doubt arose alongside Aristotle's positive use of doubt. The Cartesian method had two valuable qualities: one chronological (it endured for nine years before leading Descartes to the idea of the *cogito*) and the other metaphysical. De Grau argued that, as far as this second meaning is concerned, Descartes too was aiming at the "discovery of truth . . . which, when it is attained, is defined by doubt, defined by inquiry" (*Specimina*, p. 103). He pointed out that Cartesian doubt did not question all certainties, moral, practical, and those concerning the essence of life, when it was used in the attempt to establish a new certainty, the certainty of the *cogito*. These instinctive certainties, rooted in human nature, could not be ignored even for a moment (*Specimina*, pp. 103-4); thus the Cartesian position was much closer to classical doctrines than was generally thought, although on some points there were differences. For example, Cartesian doubt was applied to

the existence of the physical world ("things to be contemplated in the light of nature"), while Socratic irony expatiated upon moral certainties in order to consolidate them in the conscience of everyone (*Specimina*, pp. 105-12); Plato and even Aristotle used doubt at various stages of their philosophical method, while Descartes employed it only in the preliminary stage (*Specimina*, pp. 112-15, 136-7). Lastly, the Academics and Sceptics used doubt to attain a state of tranquillity for the soul and not as a means of overcoming the uncertainties in philosophical investigation and the unreliability of the senses (*Specimina*, pp. 116-23).

Having made these comparisons, de Grau was of the opinion that the position put forward by Aristotle was the clearest and most articulate in the history of philosophy, both ancient and modern, and that Descartes ended up agreeing with all the essential parts of the Aristotelian method of research. Where he deviated from the Aristotelian line was when he showed less sensitivity towards all natural and philosophical research. De Grau emphasized that Aristotle made use of doubt at every stage of scientific investigation, both in the natural and the metaphysical fields. Descartes did not follow him in this respect, as he was not concerned with the entire range of philosophical study. By quoting several passages from Aristotle and by comparing them with the Cartesian view, de Grau hoped to show the completeness of the Aristotelian method and above all the superiority of his solutions to those of Descartes. This superiority of classical Aristotelianism over modern Cartesianism was especially clear in the second book, where the latter appears to be no more than a repetition of the positions of the former.

This historical examination of the problem of doubt embraces both ancient and modern ideas in the hope of finding a coherent methodology in the search for truth:

From the ways of undertaking philosophy so far mentioned and compared it is evident that, whether one considers Socrates' irony, or Plato's method of dialogue, or Aristotle's method, which consists in posing problems — by which one may hasten to a greater certainty of human knowledge than by others — Descartes, on his way to truth, derives great assistance from doubt, when he is being initiated into the proper manner of philosophy (*Specimina*, pp. 137-8).

Here de Grau intends to demonstrate the possibility of a 'scholastic' presentation of Cartesian philosophy in terms of the classical tradition and an interpretation in the light of the Aristotelian system.

4.4.4. The tone of the *Specimina* is more characteristic of disputation than of historical criticism. Quotations are used to back up his thesis on the method of doubt. De Grau's use of sources, however, does not differ from the critically correct method used in the *Historia philosophica*: he introduces

and compares the passages with great care, mingling them with his own observations and elucidations.

In the historical part of the *Specimina*, de Grau does not put forward his views on the use of doubt and its initial role in scientific and philosophical research. As the title of the work implies, he intends only to "demonstrate" (*ostendere*) a few interesting positions held by classical thinkers. Therefore, he does not assert a thesis which then has to be demonstrated, but develops the theme of doubt through the arguments of the classical thinkers themselves, with particular reference to Laetius, Cicero, and Sextus Empiricus, and refrains from taking up a definite position in favour of one of the philosophers or philosophical sects.

Nevertheless, de Grau's constant references to Aristotle's works do point to the Aristotelian system as the natural outcome of classical thought. For example, he quotes all the Aristotelian passages in which the term *aporia* appears (and he explains the meaning from time to time; *Specimina*, pp. 50–58). He closely follows Pedro da Fonseca's *Institutiones dialecticae* and his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, making considerable use of his explanations. The supremacy of Aristotle is shown by analysing the richness of his works and his systematic approach to natural and human investigation. De Grau's arguments are based on the scholarly presentation of Aristotle's work itself, not as mediated through the commentary and disputation typical of medieval and contemporary schoolmen. His citing Pedro da Fonseca (and occasionally Suárez) does not invoke cut-and-dried commentators but scholars whose activity had been aimed at a full exposition of Aristotle's thought.

The *Specimina* are not simply a celebration of Aristotle's prowess — the second book, in particular, makes it clear that all classical thought can stand up to comparison with the Cartesian 'innovation'. Thus de Grau believed, on the one hand, that only through a familiarity with the history of classical thought was it possible to view the Cartesian proposals in their true dimensions; and on the other, that the genesis and the value of the methodological positions contained in the Aristotelian system could be explained through the study of the philosophers who engaged in the question of doubt.

Thus he stated that the classical philosophers' key positions on doubt were characterized as: protection from prejudice (*Specimina*, pp. 139–55), the fallaciousness of the senses and judgements based on them (*Specimina*, pp. 155–69), the search for truth conducted purely "by mind or by reason" (*Specimina*, pp. 183–95), the concept of the mind as 'rational substance' (*Specimina*, pp. 234–8), the affirmation of a series of "notions . . . naturally implanted in the the human mind" (*Specimina*, pp. 247–54), and God as the source of certainty (*Specimina*, pp. 262–70). The most widely quoted texts are those of Plato and Aristotle; but he mentions also all the philosophers considered in the first book, with the addition of the Stoics, the Cyrenaics, and Epicurus. Thus the theoretical part of the *Specimina* becomes itself a fabric of passages

and historical references, arranged in order to demonstrate the most important and fundamental arguments on doubt developed by classical thought. Even de Grau's theoretical exposition of the question of doubt ends up being an inventory of classical positions: the final chapters of the *Specimina* are effectively a review of the classical doctrines in relation to the fundamental aspects of Cartesian philosophy. De Grau alternates one chapter on the classical positions with one on Descartes's positions, examining doctrines on the senses, the body, the mind, ideas, and God. In his opinion the positions of Greek and Roman philosophers and those of Descartes are often in agreement: passages from the *Meditationes* and the *Principia* are cleverly arranged so as to demonstrate surprising analogies with passages taken from the classical texts.

The citations from Descartes's works are essentially used as a guide in order to emphasize the completeness and breadth of the solutions put forward by classical thinkers. For example, when speaking of the theory of matter and movement, de Grau discovered in the Platonists and in Aristotle the solution rejecting the existence of a vacuum (*Specimina*, pp. 328–31) and also the concept of the world created 'by successive motion' (*Specimina*, pp. 331–5, 360–66). Descartes's position seemed to be exactly the same, in agreement with the orientation of classical thought; consequently de Grau emphasized that Descartes's thought should not be condemned lightly, but considered attentively in the light of classical doctrines:

In conclusion, then, I should like to warn those who profess themselves hostile to Descartes and his disciples, and who tax them with devising a suspect innovation (*tanquam novitatis suspectae auctores traducunt*), after they have read these pages of mine, not to judge too harshly or hastily in individual instances, nor to condemn what has not been properly examined and inspected in every detail. Perhaps, if they enquire in this manner, they will find, even among Descartes's teachings, things fortified by the authority of the ancients, which will not displease (*Specimina*, p. 368).

4.5. *Historia philosophica*

4.5.1. The *Historia philosophica* starts with a 5-page dedication to Henrik Casimir, Prince of Nassau, to the Deputies of the Order of Frisia, and to the *Curatores* of the University of Franeker, in which de Grau complains of the academic and political power that had been ceded to the Cartesians in his country. There is a brief 3-page 'Proemium'. The subject is dealt with in 4 books which are in turn divided into chapters: the first book, 'De sapientia veterum philosophorum', contains of 11 chapters; the second book, 'De philosophia veterum philosophorum', 19; the third book, 'De philosophorum veterum philosophia', 25; and the fourth book, 'De Aristotelis philosophi', 16 on metaphysics, 34 on logic, and 31 on natural philosophy. In all, these come to 997 pages. The

indices follow, which as in the *Specimina* include authors (pp. 998-9), Greek terms used (pp. 1000-1006) and persons, concepts, and other items referred to (pp. 1007-65). The work ends with a page of *corrigenda*; there is no table of contents.

Each chapter is preceded by a summary, which averages about ten lines in length. There are neither footnotes nor references in the margins; the brief but clear references are all to be found in the main body of the text. Ample space is given to quotations, and if these are in Greek the Latin translation is often supplied. The beginning of every book contains a reference to Part 1, as a Part 2 had originally been planned. A note just after the Preface reveals that the author had given up the idea of the second part, which was also to have consisted of four books. This explains the absence of a study of Stoic or Epicurean thought or any precise reference to the Academics or Eclectics. There are only a few rapid references to the minor Socratic schools at the end of the chapter on Socrates (*Historia*, pp. 433-5).

4.5.2. De Grau divides the history of classical thought into the period of 'wisdom' (dealt with in the first book), and the period of philosophy in the true sense of the word. This last period runs from the pre-Socratics to Aristotle (and is covered by Bks. II, III, and IV). The author does not go further than Aristotle's times; the work's fundamental reference points are the Pythagoreans, Plato, and Aristotle.

For the period of wisdom, de Grau discusses the Chaldean Magi, the Indian Brahmins and Gymnosophists, the Egyptian priests, and the Celtic Druids. This review of wise men serves as an introduction to the Greek wise men. Indeed, Greek wisdom was indebted to barbarian wisdom and, in the case of Thales, a re-elaboration of elements taken from Chaldean, Egyptian, and Jewish theories. Following Laertius, de Grau studies the ideas of Pittacus, Solon, Chilon, Periander, Cleobulus, and Bias. He describes Greek 'philosophical' thought as being divided into three main currents: the Ionic, the Italic, and the Eleatic. Anaximander, Anaximenes, Diogenes of Apollonia, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus were members of the first school. Pythagoras was the founder of the second school, his successors being Archytas, Epicharmus, Philolaus, Alcmaeon, and Empedocles, who were all considered to be doctrinally completely dependent on him. De Grau therefore treats Pythagorean thought as a single entity. Xenophanes was the founder of the third school, having been a Pythagorean before becoming an independent thinker. His successors in turn were Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus, and Democritus.

De Grau follows these three principal Greek movements with a study of Scepticism. He did not link the philosophy of Pyrrho of Elis to Pythagoras, Metrodorus of Chios, and Anaxarchus, preferring to ignore these thinkers and link the Sceptics to the Eleatic school, dealing directly with their speculative contribution (following Sextus Empiricus; *Historia philosophica*, p. 349). Compared to the treatment he had given it in the *Specimina*, de Grau expounds more clearly the role of Scepticism as the opponent of all 'dogmatic' philosophies. The development of Greek thought, however, was

not obstructed by this position: Socrates was placed in the line of Ionic speculation, and with his interrogative method he overcame Sceptical 'doubt' even before it was clearly formulated by Pyrrho. Plato took up the Socratic heritage and founded a new school, the Academy. From Plato came Aristotle, who brought philosophy to the highest levels of reason.

4.5.3. The *Historia philosophica* is an uneven work; one part is a properly historical study of the doctrines of Greek philosophical sects and their relationship with barbarian thought, which is followed by a larger part devoted to the analysis of the major philosophers of antiquity, Plato and Aristotle. De Grau seems to use the first part, which is not always very thorough or complete, as an introduction to the questions dealt with by the great philosophers, and above all to facilitate an understanding of Aristotelian thought.

Throughout his historical account, de Grau makes clear his conviction that the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle represent the high point of classical thought. His treatment of Pythagorean thought, which is extensive, was designed to facilitate a better understanding of the crucial points of Platonic and Aristotelian thought, just as his treatment of Socrates was aimed at the understanding of Plato, whom he saw as the heir to Socrates' logical, moral, and metaphysical speculations. There is no thorough study here of the Socratic schools, whose importance had been made clear by Laertius and reaffirmed by Stanley, Vossius, and Hornius; this demonstrates that de Grau was primarily interested in the Platonic development of Socratic thought:

It is well known to us that Plato introduces Socrates as a speaker here and there in his writings, and out of Socrates' mind (which he esteems a great one) in matters of physics Plato both proposes his own opinions and sets up disputations . . . If we should attribute these to Socrates, they ought to be placed here; but because Plato also makes these his own, we shall present them below in connection with Plato and his philosophy, which thus may be considered Socratic-Platonic (*Historia philosophica*, p. 405).

Socrates' thought is seen as closely interrelated with that of his disciple, and their doctrines as indistinguishable.

De Grau's decision in favour of systematic philosophies explains the interpretations made in the first part, and in particular his concept of the relationship between 'philosophy' and 'wisdom'. It was not his intention to trace the history of all attempts to attain wisdom, but rather to discover in wisdom that rational-scientific element that was to blossom into a 'system'. Wisdom was not God's natural revelation, it was simply the broad understanding of the nature of things (cf., on Platonic thought, *Historia philosophica*, pp. 473-5). The only reliable account of the origins of the universe and of ancient wisdom was that of Moses (*Historia philosophica*, p. 5); thus he gave no

credence to the type of wisdom that was confused with the creation of legends. The most reliable view of the universe and nature was to be found in the Bible; de Grau deals in just a few words with the pagan views of the world and nature, considering them to be erroneous, fantastical, and senseless, but he does accept their examination of the origin of reality, that is, the use they made of reason.

He asks himself which peoples had been responsible for the creation of philosophy, and after having cited the usual sources (Laertius, Pliny, the *Suda*, Clement of Alexandria), he inclines towards the view that philosophical activity originated in the speculations of the Chaldeans and the Persians. Thus the Chaldean Magi, referred to as *sapientes*, developed a rudimentary theology and knowledge of the future (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 10-13), and these doctrines were further developed by the Indian gymnosophists and Brahmins, the Egyptians, and the Celts. Egyptian philosophy, for example, consisted of geometry, arithmetic, and astrology, as well as theology. De Grau emphasizes that this kind of wisdom really is philosophy, even if the rational aspect was still not dominant over traditional aspects, instinctive beliefs and actions (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 21-2). The Greeks assimilated this Oriental wisdom in various ways, but principally through the Jews, who had preserved and maintained the wisdom of Moses (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 32-4). De Grau ignores the earlier legendary forms of Greek wisdom; as far as he is concerned, the continuity between barbarian and Greek thought was based on the increasing use of reason and not on the transmission of doctrines in the form of legends.

De Grau's history differs from preceding *historiae philosophicae* (in particular those of Vossius and Hornius) precisely because it lacked a discussion of the relationship between Oriental thought and Greek mythology. He never refers to Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, and it is quite probable that he was not acquainted with the work, given the limited circulation of the first edition. Nevertheless, he adopts the same stance as Stanley, and excludes mythology with the intention of disassociating Oriental wisdom from its occult and ritualistic connotations. He emphatically argues that the ideas of the Seven Wise Men of Greece constituted an authentic philosophy. Thales, the first of the Wise Men of Greece, was also the first philosopher. He put the Oriental doctrines to good use and developed an advanced view of God as *mens* (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 44-6). Solon was more concerned with civil and moral philosophy than with theoretical questions, and was responsible for advancing the study of law in Greece (*Historia philosophica*, pp. 52-8).

When Pythagoras substituted the term *philosophus* for that of *sapiens* there was no change in the direction of Greek thought. Rather, the new term simply brought a greater self-awareness to intellectual research. Philosophy, as a rational impulse, had already existed in wisdom, and it was only modesty that attracted Pythagoras to the new expression ("Hence we are well aware

that Pythagoras was not absolutely the first philosopher, but had only wanted to be so called out of modesty (*modestiae*), for elsewhere Anaxagoras and Xenophanes, who lived in his times, were also philosophers", *Historia philosophica*, p. 139). Moreover, Pythagoras had completely assimilated Oriental philosophy, and would not have carried out his little terminological reform if he had not been certain that the wisdom he had assimilated was true philosophical investigation and not a mystical religious fantasy. Carefully following his authors, de Grau takes a detailed look at the sources of Pythagorean thought with the intention of emphasizing the continuity and homogeneity of Pythagorean doctrines and Oriental philosophies (among which he gives a large space to Moses' doctrines; *Historia philosophica*, pp. 120, 125-8).

'Philosophy' and 'wisdom' are therefore seen as synonymous — the former gradually taking over from the latter and demonstrating the growing awareness that philosophy is a rational activity that invents its own rules. It was an all-embracing term that continually increased the branches of activity. The history of Greek thought was the history of this increasing capacity for philosophical investigation. In de Grau's opinion, the starting-point was natural philosophy, with constantly improving methods of observation and co-ordination between different areas leading to the elaboration of sophisticated doctrines on matter, the universe, heavenly bodies, and God. Bk. II, ch. 3, on Anaxagoras is interesting for the thoroughness of its references (*Historia*, pp. 90-105). On the other hand his treatment of the Eleatic school, in Bk. III, chs. 2-3, is not very well-defined; the ancient sources on Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus, and Democritus are all thrown in together, without any attempt to distinguish between the early Eleatics and the Atomists that followed, other than by ascribing to each a different doctrine on the necessity of things (*Historia*, pp. 316-48). Interests broadened when Socrates introduced his ethical questions. While Pythagoras had demonstrated a keen interest in ethics, de Grau argues that he had not treated it independently as Socrates was to do. Therefore the speculations of the Italic sect are described as a broadening of the investigation into nature, in consequence of Pythagoras' profound interpretation of Oriental wisdom (*Historia*, pp. 119-31, 156-7). And thus Pythagoras is described as having developed the investigation of nature into a complex expression of theoretical, practical, and ascetic aspirations (de Grau sees Pythagorean philosophy as being divided into "purging" and "perfecting" parts: *Historia*, p. 141).

The systematic nature of Pythagorean thought did not, however, create an organic relationship between natural and ethical enquiry. It was deeply involved in the scientific demonstration of nature, which owed much to mathematics (*Historia*, pp. 188-91). Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans discussed with great clarity the questions of natural harmony, the heavens, the soul, and the *summum bonum*, and de Grau sets out their arguments very

carefully, following the interpretation of Iamblichus. However, this Pythagorean debate did not bring an awareness of the autonomy of ethics, or achieve a rational definition of human society. The theoretical view of happiness had to be based on a view of the whole world without reference to man. De Grau is convinced that the aphoristic nature of Pythagorean ethical statements prevents them from being considered rational contributions (*Historia*, pp. 287-99).

De Grau considers Socrates to be the first to view mankind autonomously, abandoning the study of nature as "obscure and uncertain" (*Historia*, pp. 408-13). This does not mean that he did not concern himself with natural philosophy, mathematics, and theology, but that he always considered these in relation to man, his virtue, and his relationship to the gods. Socratic considerations on the gods and the immortality of the soul were always of a moral nature. Socrates' disciples, in particular Plato, continued this interest in moral and theological questions. The philosophical mainstream started with Plato and consisted of two schools: the Academy and the Peripatetic school (*Historia*, pp. 434-5). In his treatment of moral problems, Plato also manages to reintroduce the treatment of natural and metaphysical questions. Indeed de Grau writes: "Plato is said to have been midway between Pythagoras and Socrates, so that he reduced the sublimity of Pythagoras to humility, and that which is humble and dispirited in Socrates to gravity, so that he seemed in this way to be more popular than Pythagoras and more serious than Socrates in speaking and philosophizing" (*Historia*, p. 476).

Plato's philosophy can be considered a system because of both the clarity of his investigations and the vast scope of his experiences and doctrinal references (Socrates, Egyptian thought, Pythagorism, Jewish thought; *Historia*, pp. 438-51, 458-9). Plato was able to bring together the dogmatic method and the method of doubt through the dialogue form of his works, ascribing different roles and different attitudes to the various speakers (*Historia*, pp. 460-61). In de Grau's opinion, this mixture of theoretical dogmas and aporetic procedures produced a considerable doctrinal corpus, which attracted a great number of students (*Historia*, pp. 462-3). However, the dialogue form in which the doctrines were expounded, the poetic metaphors and symbolism adopted, were not always successful in rendering the system clearly as a whole (*Historia*, pp. 463-4). The dialogues themselves need to be put in some sort of order. De Grau groups them into their traditional tetralogies (*Euthyphro*, *The Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*, etc.), in an attempt to define their contents according the prevailing theme — moral, metaphysical, psychological, polemical (against Sophistry), or dialectical (*Historia*, pp. 469-72).

De Grau's analysis of doctrines uses categories based on the nature of the philosophical questions they address. He starts by defining the various

branches of philosophy and its propaedeutic doctrines (ch. 12) and then discusses dialectics *sive logica* (ch. 13); being, the godhead, and Creation (ch. 14); divine providence (ch. 15); matter (ch. 16); the elements (ch. 17); the world and its soul (ch. 18); the planets and stars (chs. 19–20); the origin and nature of man (ch. 21); the soul (ch. 22); the *summum bonum* (ch. 23); and the virtues (ch. 24). This order was not, however, in de Grau's mind imposed from without: he was expounding what was in substance, though not in the way it was treated in the dialogues, the true Platonic 'system'. This was based on its view of God as One and as providence, who creates by spreading proper light and proper order (*Historia*, pp. 513–41), of matter as eternal, formless, and infinite (*Historia*, pp. 542–5), and of Ideas, the "exemplary causes of all phenomena" (*Historia*, pp. 546–52).

Adhering to the patristic interpretation filtered via the doctrines of the Renaissance Platonists, and avoiding the Neoplatonic emphasis on mysticism, de Grau identified the theological teleology in Plato's natural doctrines as the following: the world tended towards and was animated by God (*Historia*, pp. 561–77), the movement of the heavenly bodies obeyed the divine will (*Historia*, pp. 577–86), and man was "the measure of all things (*rerum mensura*)", a union of body and soul with a teleological purpose (*Historia*, pp. 603–22). These were in agreement with the ethical doctrines, because man achieved happiness through his relationship to the Good and through the search for God and truth (*Historia*, pp. 640–60). De Grau perceived the systematization of Platonic thought in terms of this constant inter-relationship between the theological doctrine of the Good and man's moral destiny. Nature, mankind, action, and knowledge were all governed by a teleology that was based not on the Neoplatonic concept of the circularity of love, but on the good and rational character of natural and human realities. De Grau's interpretation did not take into account questions of the state and political life, as he was clearly more interested in teleology than in the political implications of the use of reason.

The nature of the Aristotelian system was different. De Grau appears to emphasize the difference between the classical philosophers, while at the same time recognizing that they were all moving towards a rational investigation of nature and ethics. Aristotle's philosophy was primarily an ontological investigation: both *scientia* (knowledge) and *sapientia* (wisdom) are to be found in the study of general and universal principles (*Historia*, pp. 694–6); metaphysics was the first and most important aspect of this investigation, which perceived 'substance' as the central reality (*Historia*, pp. 707–9). De Grau's interpretation of Aristotle brings the doctrine of Being to the foreground. His metaphysics and the view of Being according to its characteristics (primarily expounded in the *Metaphysics*) contrast with the theology and concept of the Good in a teleological context, as argued for in the *Timaeus*. De Grau's description of Aristotelian thought first deals with sub-

stance (ch. 4), the attributes of Being (ch. 5: one being; ch. 6: true being; ch. 7: the essence of Goodness), the natural order (ch. 8), potency and act (ch. 9). He then discusses some other metaphysical themes: per se and per accidens (ch. 10), the before and after (ch. 11), infinity (ch. 12), abstraction (ch. 13), the beginning (ch. 14), necessity and contingency (ch. 15). When he moved on to metaphysics in the strict sense of the word, de Grau pointed out that the Aristotelian concept was concerned only with separate and motionless substance (*Historia*, p. 743). His treatment of metaphysics was very brief, unlike his next subject, logic, which he deals with in considerable depth.

De Grau believed that the importance of the systematic nature of Aristotelian thought was to be found in the completeness of its theory of science, which by basing itself firmly on the metaphysical theory of substance had the necessary precision to justify the study of nature, and, in the final analysis, even the search for the truth. This evaluation of the Aristotelian system was confirmed by the emphasis that was placed on Aristotelian logic in the second part of Bk. iv. Indeed the logic he refers to is the methodology required to study substance and its causes, not a pure theory of concepts, judgement, and reason. Although de Grau keeps to the concept of three branches of logic, he discusses questions that are clearly methodological, and takes up the question of the application of the rules of logic to the theory of substance. This simplifies the transition to the third part of Bk. iv, on "natural philosophy extended from Aristotle". Natural philosophy simply applied the rules of scientific theory in order to investigate 'form' and 'matter', that is, nature as made up of substances in motion (*Historia*, pp. 867-70, 890-92).

De Grau's preferences are implicit in the proportion of the book concerned with Aristotelianism and, in particular, natural philosophy and scientific theory. Aristotle represented the high point of classical thought. The sheer volume of his arguments on natural philosophy, and the organic nature of his solutions, demonstrates the superiority of his philosophy. This superiority was also argued for in the *Specimina*, in relation to the search for truth. The sections dealing with Aristotle's natural philosophy went much further than the simple presentation of extracts from the works on physics; they aim to demonstrate further developments that could be implied from many of the doctrines, *ex sensu Philosophi*. Aristotle was understood as the philosopher who carried out the most complete study of natural-philosophical methodology. Although he was well aware that the Aristotelian cosmology was outdated, de Grau sets out to demonstrate the coherence of the various arguments, using those maintaining that the Earth was in the centre of the world to show how an ancient theory can be formulated so systematically that it can stand up to many of the modern arguments and command the respect of modern thinkers (*Historia*, pp. 918-35).

It is therefore difficult to understand the complete lack of any reference to

ethics, the crowning achievement of the Aristotelian system. Only a lack of enterprise or space could have led to the omission of the very part of Aristotle's philosophy that could have consolidated the concept of a 'science' in the sense of a thorough and rigorous search for truth, and the scientific systemization of both the human and the natural world. This omission, like that of Epicurean, Stoic, and Academic thought already mentioned, leads us to think that the work was abruptly interrupted. This would seem to fit in with the events concerning de Grau's failure to secure the chair of philosophy at the University of Franeker, although there are no extant writings by the author to confirm this hypothesis.

4.5.4. Abraham de Grau's *Historia philosophica* is the most fully developed historiographical achievement in the Low Countries, and this becomes clear if one considers the methodology it applied. De Grau's work is a considerable improvement, both in its philosophical analysis and in its scholarly treatment of the historical material, over the writings of Vossius and Hornius. His chapters are organized systematically, and above all his approach to the various philosophers and their doctrines is well ordered and draws upon a wide-ranging analysis. His method in many ways is similar to Stanley's in the care he took to write detailed expositions; he distanced himself, however, from the tendency to make brief, encomiastic, biographical studies, preferring to put greater stress on the philosophers' actual doctrines and their arguments. In the *Historia philosophica* de Grau was primarily interested in the relevance of the speculative data to contemporary philosophical debate, and as a result he drew heavily on the philosophers' original texts. This was a novelty, and broke with the method followed by Vossius and Hornius (and to a lesser extent Stanley), which had exploited the classical philosophical historians as sources, while ignoring the writings of the philosophers themselves. In de Grau's commentaries, there is a succession of direct quotations and contemporary accounts, which are used to clarify the various doctrines and to discuss their significance.

Each philosopher under discussion is briefly introduced with some biographical information, with details added about possible contacts with Eastern civilization (as in the case of Thales, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, and Plato). De Grau then comments on the philosopher's moral character and the style of his works and teachings, and finally gives a review of the philosopher's thought according to a fairly flexible arrangement by which he first discusses general principles, then God, the Universe, and the elements. He examines particular doctrines, which are discussed at length, and neither indulges in digressions nor succumbs to the temptation merely to summarize. He makes constant use of contemporary accounts and the philosophers' own words, or, where a philosopher's work is no longer extant, he refers accurately to the relevant historians. De Grau usually quotes at length from the passages that

deal with the essential points of the doctrine under discussion, following these, by way of comment, with contemporary classical and patristic accounts. He never concludes his analysis of the various interpretations of a single doctrine with a personal judgement or preference, nor does he attempt a strictly theoretical evaluation. Indeed, his only assessments concern a philosopher's character and his abilities as a theorist and teacher. Nevertheless, de Grau never praises a philosopher trusting only his own opinion, but always backs up his judgement with contemporary accounts.

By this procedure, de Grau demonstrates the thought of the philosopher without artificiality or oversimplification. Yet he it was not his intention to study the texts and the contemporary accounts from a critical or philological point of view; he did not attempt a critical examination of historical information in order to establish its truth and accuracy. Equally he does not construct a general overview of the development of classical thought. He restricts himself to continuing the work started in the *Specimina* by placing the philosophical authors in the foreground and by referring each problem to them and using his erudition to explain and to analyse, without attempting to verify or suggest new interpretations. He only mentions the essential details of the links between authors, without seeking to construct an overall view of them. When, for example, he is dealing with the philosophers of the Ionic school (which is the only school whose authors' doctrines are discussed separately), he briefly considers their chronological order at the end of one chapter and at the beginning of the next, but fails to enquire into the possible influence of one philosopher on another.

As he does not explicitly outline the development of Greek thought, we can only reconstruct its essential form by careful collation of the meagre comments made at the end of each chapter. The many references and the way the philosophers are quoted do imply a certain concept of the development of philosophical inquiry, but there are no explicit statements to justify the idea that de Grau had developed an overview of classical thought. He expressly debates only those questions that are associated with the texts under discussion. He considers his task as a scholar and a philosopher to be complete once he has carefully examined the doctrines in the widest and clearest possible context. Classical thought is thus presented to all readers so that they can judge its validity and compare it to contemporary authors.

4.6. Both the *Specimina* and the *Historia philosophica* had little circulation outside the Low Countries. Indeed we can find only one brief critical note on the *Specimina* in the *Neue Bibliothec* of 1711, and no reference to either work before Brucker's *Historia critica* and the classic reference works by Struve and Stollus. Giuseppe Valletta appears to have used the *Historia philosophica* for his *Istoria filosofica*, but the references are limited in number.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Heumann, who was a very thorough observer of the *historiae philosophicae* (even Witte's brief sketch of philosophical history did not escape his notice), did not review the works of de Grau, nor did he show any knowledge of them in his *Acta philosophorum*.

The eighteenth-century writings that briefly mention de Grau do not make it clear in which circles his works were discussed, or what role they had in the debate on Cartesian 'scholasticism'. Brucker, for example, when commenting on the *Historia philosophica*, ascribes to de Grau the intention of writing an apologia that undermined its value as a work of scholarship (Vol. 1, p. 36), but he fails to understand that this apologia is, if anything, an attempt to reconcile the ancients with the Cartesian philosophy, and shows no tendency to excessive praise. De Grau's method, which stresses through objective exposition the speculative and systematic aspects of doctrines, was on the whole completely ignored. A typical example of this attitude can be found in Degérando's appraisal (p. 191 n. f) which in fact refers to the *Historia philosophica* as a work that survives only in name. He clearly has no knowledge of its method or how its arguments were developed, and even confuses the author's name with that of the philologist Graevius. Today, it is the historical and speculative commitment that places it amongst the most important seventeenth-century historiographical works.

4.7. On de Grau's life, work and character:

J. Voerbroek (Perizonius), *Oratio funebris de vita et morte viri clarissimi et vere eruditi A. G. (Franecker, 1683)*; published in his *Orationes XII varii et praestantioris argumenti* (Leiden, 1740), pp. 555-92; Jöcher, II, col. 1142; E. L. Vriemoet, *Athenarum Frisiacarum libri duo* (Leeuwarden, 1758), pp. 472-9; Saxe, IV, p. 580; C. Ekama, *Oratio de Frisia ingeniorum mathematicorum in primis fertilis* (Leeuwarden, 1809), p. 25; H. Collot d'Escury, *Holland's roem in Kunsten en Wetenschappen* (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1840), Vol. VI, Part 1, p. 64; Van Der Aa, v, p. 115.

On the reception of his works in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

'Nachricht von den Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', NB, II (1711), p. 385; Struve, Vol. 1, ch. 3, § 1, p. 155; Brucker, Vol. 1, p. 36; Degérando, p. 191 n. f.

On the historiography of philosophy:

Rak, pp. 100-107; Braun, p. 67; Malusa, 'Origini', p. 29.

On Scepticism and the historiography of philosophy:

C. B. Schmitt, 'The Development of the Historiography of Scepticism: From the Renaissance to Brucker' in *Scepticism from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. R. Popkin and C. B. Schmitt (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 35; Munich and Wolfenbüttel, 1987) pp. 185-200; reprinted in C. B. Schmitt, *Reappraisals in Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. C. Webster (London, 1989), no. XIV.

CHAPTER 3

THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS AND THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION

Theophilus Gale wrote his history no more than fifteen years after Thomas Stanley, but there are profound differences between the two works. Both written in English and both monuments of careful study and enormous learning, they are, however, based on completely different premisses; for during these fifteen years, English history of philosophy became an integral part of philosophical apologetics. This change was brought about by the group of thinkers traditionally referred to as the Cambridge Platonists. This philosophical school, centred on the University of Cambridge, sprang up in the mid-seventeenth century for a variety of religious and cultural reasons; it made a direct impact on the history of philosophy and must therefore be examined in detail.

The Cambridge Platonists were aware of the need to overcome religious differences that were tearing the country apart in the middle of the century. Whichcote, Smith, and Culverwell believed that the polemics in which men engaged could be understood and reconciled only through an overall vision of a superior rational religion, which they were able to construct because their intellectual and religious viewpoint maintained that every other position held a more or less defective view of the truth. For them, genuine religious devotion involved thought, and faith was an act of reason, a conscious ascent of the mind to supreme truths, which, while they never could be arrived at by reason, were looked upon as definitive laws ruling over the natural and human world. A recurring theme, especially in the works of Ralph Cudworth and Henry More, was Ficino's *docta religio*, which called for a return to a rational Christianity, a harmonious synthesis of the natural revelations of various peoples that led to deism and an idealism in which the rational impulse became piety through the contemplation of ideas.

According to the Cambridge Platonists, this religious point of view explained why reason was not a purely natural phenomenon concerned only with the study of the physical world and unconnected to religious truths. Atheism and materialism were the extreme consequences of the use of reason alone — errors that ensnared philosophers who ignored the guidance of revelation. Their rejection of purely natural reason was linked to their criticisms of the Aristotelian scholasticism. For Cudworth and More, Aristotelianism limited humanity to the natural world. Besides preparing the ground for materialistic atheism, Aristotelian natural philosophy broke the link between experience and reason as well as between reason and revelation. Joseph Glanvill, the brilliant defender of experimental natural philosophy, expressed a similar view. He believed that authentic religious attitudes were to be found not in syllogisms, but where reason met the whole of reality pervaded by the presence of God. These attitudes were to be found in a respect for freedom and should extol the contemplation of ideas. In *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (London, 1660; republished in 1665 under the title of *Scepsis scientifica*), Glanvill described orthodox Scholasticism as the source of absurd dogmas and the cause of the degeneration of reason's ability freely to carry on fruitful scientific studies. Religious and scientific dogmatism were rejected in favour of a single concept of reason that deferred to experience and then to revelation.

It was the intention of the Cambridge philosophers and theologians to reaffirm the importance of reason in Christianity. They rejected the two extremes of the absolute autonomy of reason and the strict adherence to confessional dogma. By using reason to create a sound basis for faith, they believed that it was possible to defeat both materialistic atheism and Puritan fanaticism, and they maintained that divine revelation was also a historical event intertwined with the discoveries of human reason. Thus there was nothing strange if rational analysis uncovered the process by which revelation (both natural and supernatural) influenced humanity and brought about intellectual and moral progress. Whichcote wrote for one of his sermons: "Man is not at all settled or confirmed in his religion, until his religion is the self-same with the reason of his mind; that when he speaks reason, he speaks religion, or when he speaks religiously, he speaks reasonably" (Benjamin Whichcote, 'The Work of Reason', in *The Cambridge Platonists*, ed. E. T. Campagnac (Oxford, 1901), p. 55).

The Cambridge philosophers believed that divine intervention created a flow of ideas, comprehension, and actions (as well as the formation of entities and natural laws that govern them) leading to the twin development of knowledge and theoretical method on the one hand and faith and piety on the other. This too drew upon late fifteenth-century Florentine Neoplatonism; the concept of the *prisca theologia* was coined by Ficino, later developed and documented in Steuco's *De perenni philosophia*, and finally consolidated

in English and European circles in the Hermetic and alchemical reflections to be found in Robert Fludd's *Philosophia Moysaica* (Gouda, 1638) and *Utriusque cosmi, maioris scilicet et minoris . . . historia* (Oppenheim, 1617–19). The *prisca theologia* is the key to the works of Cudworth and More, who perceived it as a fundamental revelation that was both rational and historical. In his dedication to Cudworth in *Conjectura Cabbalistica*, Henry More referred to the conviction shared by his friend and colleague that the divine revelation transcribed by Moses in the first three chapters of Genesis was the heritage for all mankind; Pythagoras, Plato, and other wise men had developed its truths in their works. More invited Cudworth to join him in the defence of his theories or “opulent treasury of erudition” on the triple meaning (literal, philosophical, and moral) of Moses’ account of the Creation, and in so doing he intended to link together the study of ancient pagan thought and the study of Moses (*Conjectura Cabbalistica*, in Henry More, *Scriptorum Philosophicorum tomus alter* (London, 1679), pp. 463–6).

The flow of ideas as a divine manifestation had to be verified historically by a critical inspection of those texts and documents that were supposed to have expressed it, such as the Scriptures, the histories of ancient peoples, the writings of mystery religions, philosophers, and poets. Historical knowledge was thus seen as the most important instrument in the refutation of atheism and other beliefs that rejected the spirit. They did not perceive it as an imprecise science, the knowledge of the merely probable, or an improvised approach to their laws and their literature. The scholar had the capacity to discover in written documents — in testimonies and in fundamental works — the truth existing from the beginning of history. It was an activity that used reason to investigate reason. More's *Conjectura Cabbalistica*, which first appeared in English in 1653 (*Conjectura Cabbalistica; Or a Conjectural Essay of interpreting the minde of Moses, according to a three fold Cabbala*), was then translated into Latin for publication with other works in 1679. It demonstrates the faith of the Cambridge philosophers in the application of rational analysis to history of philosophy. One example is to be found in the preface to *Triplicis Cabbalae Defensio*, written as an appendix to *Conjectura Cabbalistica* in order to clarify some controversial points of Moses’ doctrine. Here the author put the doctrines of pagan philosophers, rabbis, and prophets on the same level, as they were all affected by the same light of reason (*Triplicis Cabbalae Defensio*, in More, *Scriptorum Philosophicorum tomus alter*, pp. 497–9).

A similar position was adopted in Cudworth's *The True Intellectual System of The Universe: the first part: Wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is confuted and its impossibility demonstrated* (London, 1678; 2nd edn, 1743, in 2 vols.). Its lengthy preface declares its intention of inflicting a mortal blow to atheism through the rational study of ancient philosophical and theological doctrines. He believes that ancient pagan thought included

a trinitarian outlook, and argues that historical and rational investigation was capable of clarifying how this trinitarianism worked within Orphic, Pythagorean, and Platonic thought, as well as in Oriental wisdom. These reflections on the revelation of the Christian concept of the Trinity led to a very important conclusion: that the existence of the divine relationship of the Trinity was not a truth established by dogma, but a conviction that could have been arrived at and analysed by anyone who could reason freely. In Cudworth's opinion, this possibility demonstrated that philology together with philosophical conceptualization was capable of establishing certainty and truth (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, 1678, 'Preface to the Reader', pp. [11]–[13]).

The faith of the Cambridge Platonists in historical knowledge was based on two underlying beliefs: first, in a rational approach to information obtained philologically which could produce the elements necessary to reveal the truth; second, in inspired reason, which resonated in sympathy with the historical accounts of revelation, because of the nature of intuition which rose above the critical and philological plane and drew directly upon the divine. Both these positions emerged in the Cambridge school and blended together to form the mainstay of their historical views. Ralph Cudworth's works tended more to the former position and Henry More's to the latter.

The True Intellectual System of the Universe, an extensive study of impressive erudition (the first edition consists of 899 pages of text), addresses the entire spectrum of ancient history and analyses the presence of divine revelation amongst the peoples of the world. This revelation became the *logos* and was either accepted or rejected by philosophers. Cudworth believed that one-sided materialistic views could not be refuted by abstract arguments on the nature of God, but that the only way to overcome the arrogance of atheists was through the historical demonstration of the divine presence which was present in philosophical doctrines and in the wisdom that had evolved amongst various peoples. The only way of approaching these doctrines and systems was through historical learning, developed in the Renaissance and in the Low Countries. Cudworth therefore linked his philosophical apologetics to the methodology of Vossius, Stanley, and Hornius. In 'The Preface to the Reader', he wrote:

In this Fourth Chapter, We were necessitated by the Matter it self, to run out into Philology and Antiquity; as also in the other Parts of the Book, we do often give Account, of the Doctrine of the Ancients: which however some Over-severe Philosophers, may look upon fastidiously, or Undervalue or depreciate; yet, as we conceived it often necessary so possibly may the Variety thereof not be Undergratefull to others; and this Mixture of Philology, throughout the Whole, Sweeten and Allay the Severity of the Philosophy to them: the main thing which the Book pretends to, in the mean time, being

the Philosophy of Religion. But for our parts, we neither call Philosophy, not yet Philosophy, our Mistress; but serve our selves of Either, as Occasion requireth (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, 'Preface to the Reader', pp. [12]–[13]).

This union between philology and philosophical investigation would appear to have been indispensable for a system that brought the many and varied voices of the past together in an integrated historical overview.

Cudworth planned his treatment of the philosophical system of the universe (as distinct from the Copernican system of the heavens) in three parts: the historical and systematic confutation of atheism; the demonstration of God's goodness and providence, as the author of natural law; the demonstration that human freedom and justice, and rewards and punishments, follow divine reason (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, 'Preface to the Reader', pp. [3]–[4]). *The True Intellectual System* only carries out the first part. The chapters are divided as follows: ch. 1, the illustration of atomistic, fatalistic, mechanistic, and in general corpuscular doctrines; ch. 2, the refutation of the arguments and the *forma mentis* of atheism based on a mechanistic view; ch. 3, the exposition and confutation of hylozoistical and dynamic materialism which placed God on the same level as nature; ch. 4, the assertion that the concept of God was innate, and the historical refutation of the theory that denied the presence of God in the human mind since the beginning; ch. 5, demonstration of the existence of God through the consensus of human thought, the immortality and spirituality of the soul, and natural law. Throughout, Cudworth carries out an analysis of the philosophical systems that refute or qualify the existence of God. The unity of human thought since the original revelation is demonstrated by referring all historical data to a common heritage rather than through a chronological development of doctrines.

There is an important example of this procedure in the first chapter, which is concerned mainly with 'corpuscular philosophy' or in other words the atomistic concepts whose sources even went back to Moses and were professed by the Phoenician Mochos or Moschus (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, pp. 7–51). This reference to Moses means that the atomist doctrine was believed from the very beginnings of history. Cudworth then develops his argument to show that the atheistic use to which Leucippus and Democritus put their atomistic theory was a deviation from a truth that had always existed in ancient thought, which concerned the dependence of matter, consisting of atoms of varying quantities, on the divine intervention that had created them and governed their motion.

And whereas we conceive this Atomick Physiology, as the Essentials thereof, to be Unquestionably True, viz. That the only Principles of Bodies, are Magnitude, Figure, Site, Motion, and Rest; and that Qualities and Forms of Inanimate Bodies, are Really nothing,

but several Combinations of these, Causing several Phancies in us : (Which excellent Discovery therefore, so long agoe made, is a Notable Instance of the Wit and Sagacity of the Ancients :) So do we in the Next place, make it manifest, that this Atomick Phylology rightly understood, is so far from being either the Mother or Nurse of Atheism, or any ways Favourable thereunto, (as is Vulgarly supposed ;) that it is indeed, the most directly Opposite to it of any, and the greatest Defence against the same (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, 'Preface to the Reader', p. [7]).

All ancient thought had to be taken into account and was thus affected by this corpuscular view, although it had often been misinterpreted for various reasons. Plato's struggle against Democritus' atheistic and mechanical interpretations started from the very sound position that the mechanical movement of matter was governed by God, but ended up proving the very atomistic positions that he unsuccessfully wished to distance himself from (*The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, pp. 52-3).

Cudworth places the ancient doctrines in thematic order, which makes it easier to study the speculative core of each. He thus manages to analyse very precisely, and carefully to set out each philosophical position and its particular contribution, without attempting an overall and systematic classification. Each philosophy is addressed in the context of the refutation of atheism. No position is seen as being essentially atheistic, but only as a part of ancient thought, which either deviated from the truth or persisted in ignoring its self-evident nature. Cudworth wished to demonstrate the degree of deviation of the atheistic philosophies from the truth that is present and immanent in the entire course of history.

The works of Henry More, on the other hand, are marked by an interest in the occult, and drift off into series of evocative interpretations of the human consensus on revealed truths. More valued the learning of his friend Cudworth, but his method for proving the existence of a divine presence in history was provided by the Renaissance Cabbala. He draws a distinction between philosophy's literal interpretation and a moral and mystical one. The application of this triple Cabbala (for More, the term was equivalent to scriptural interpretation) did not apply only to the sacred text, but to all texts that belonged to the main current in the development of wisdom and drew their inspiration from the origins of humanity. When he discusses philosophy, he goes into some detail about how the Pythagoreans developed the original revelation of their doctrine of numbers. In this way he intended to clarify the contribution which could be made to the understanding of the story of the Six Days of Moses through the texts and historical accounts of the Pythagorean School (*Conjectura Cabbalistica*, pp. 468-9, 556-91). This interpretation meant that for More the most important step in the analysis of Moses' revelation was to be found in the Pythagorean School, which

perceived the universe as the product of Creation and held together by numerical harmonies. His historiographical task was continuously to link philosophical and sapiential sources with the philosophy of Moses, and to explain Genesis in terms of later doctrines, some of which were considered reliable interpretations of this original revelation.

More used Ficino's concept of the *prisca theologia* to follow the stages of the spread of wisdom that followed the Creation and Moses' revelation, but he did not distinguish on a philological level between the contributions of different peoples. In his opinion, the historical analysis of human thought meant the interpretation of expressions of thought and the uncovering of the underlying continuity. There were no philosophical schools, only converging accounts that all lead to a central doctrine, which could be aspired to by all spirits wishing to arrive at the truth. The Jews, the Egyptians, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus were all part of a single philosophical movement, which clarified the rationality of the universe, the primacy of ideas and numbers, the immortality of the soul, and divine providence. In place of the chronological approach, More refers all philosophical positions to problems arising from the biblical accounts of the Creation. Individual philosophies are treated as hermeneutic contributions to the understanding of Moses' revelation (*Triplicis Cabbalae defensio*, in More, *Scriptorum philosophicorum tomus alter*, pp. 551-4: this is ch. 1 of the 'Appendix ad defensionem Cabbalae philosophicae').

The views held by Cudworth and More on the history of philosophy are the key to understanding the philosophical historiography that developed alongside *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* and *Conjectura Cabbalistica*. The authors were not historians of philosophy in the full and technical sense, but both wrote the occasional influential treatise on the history of philosophy. They were very aware of how the history of thought should be interpreted and how its study should be carried out. This awareness that More and Cudworth demonstrated in their writings helps us to understand better the actual histories of philosophy written by other members of the Cambridge School. The two leaders were equally influential on authors who dealt with the history of ancient philosophy, and it is not possible therefore to distinguish two separate historiographical trends. The reliance on learning guided by reason was taken from Cudworth and the intuition and hermeneutic overview from More.

Two historians of philosophy emerging from this Cambridge circle appear set on bringing together the positions of the two most important philosophers: Theophilus Gale, the author of *The Court of the Gentiles* and *Philosophia generalis*, came from Oxford and made use of More and Cudworth in his defence of Puritanism; and Thomas Burnet, author of *Archaeologia philosophica*, although an admirer of More, also took Cudworth's advice on the importance of scholarship and a more critical approach to various kinds of

wisdom. Both make careful use of the scholarship of ancient, Renaissance, and seventeenth-century historians and of the Church Fathers, and are equally involved in developing interpretative theories on the earliest wisdom. It is significant that both believed in the primacy of Moses, a position More had taken from the Church Fathers. Gale expanded on the views put forward in *Conjectura Cabbalistica* (and also in *Triplicis Cabbalae defensio*, pp. 551–2) on the decisive influence of Moses on Pythagoras, and considered Jewish thought to be the founder of all later thought. Burnet went so far as to claim the text of Genesis to be the starting point and the culmination of all ancient thought, in the sense that every form of wisdom or philosophy was required either to confirm or to reject Moses' concept of the Earth. Both historians attempt to present a view of the history of thought that was neither a dry schematic exposition of doctrines nor the description of a monolithic block of truth. The concept of the history of philosophy that comes out of these works differs from Stanley's and those of the Dutch university philologists, as well as from the ideas outlined in Bacon's historical plan. History is perceived as a unitary event that takes its cue from revelation and unfolds through the doctrines that at various intervals approach or distance themselves from this revealed truth, according to the personal choices of the philosophers involved. The progress of reason is therefore tied to free will. Glanvill introduced this view of the destiny of human learning in his work *Plus ultra; or the Progress and Advancement of Knowledge Since the Days of Aristotle* (London, 1688). He wished to show that, contrary to Scholasticism, mankind was capable of progress in the field of science, once he had freed himself from the false beliefs of Aristotelianism. Glanvill transferred More's and Cudworth's view of the history of philosophy to the history of science and, in so doing, demonstrated the fertility of the historical view held by Platonists in his circle, which had been concerned with how human reason could free itself from the fetters of dogmatism and the obstacles imposed by a narrow naturalistic view.

In the historical review in *Plus ultra*, Glanvill mentions the progress that had been carried out after the synthesis of Aristotle's natural philosophy in the fields of chemistry, anatomy, mathematics, astronomy, optics, geography, natural history, instrument invention (the telescope, the microscope, the thermometer, the barometer, the compass), and mass communications (the printing press). Glanvill reconciled confidence in the progress of an enquiring reason with the radical critique of dogmatic reason, thus completing the anti-Scholastic and anti-intellectual campaign that he had started in *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*. The latter work, published in 1660, was dominated by the Sceptical views of Sextus Empiricus, which he recreated through a scrupulous philological method. In *Plus ultra* his historical studies used the Sceptical outlook in order to confute unjustified optimism and to advise scientists and philosophers to look ahead and trust only in experimen-

tal observation. Glanvill had introduced Scepticism in order to justify his use of history, but not in order to break with the concept of historical development. His use of Sextus Empiricus differed from that of the Renaissance (Gianfrancesco Pico and Agrippa), which had seen the destruction of dogmatic reason as the result of a lack of confidence in the progress of human thought. Glanvill added his voice to the chorus of Neoplatonists who were attacking Scholasticism, and his work encouraged Gale and Burnet to link the development of ancient philosophy to the development of science in the modern age and throw off the Aristotelian tradition even in the field of the history of science. Indeed Gale attempted to demonstrate in *Philosophia generalis* that Plato's view of nature was the most complete to be developed in the classical world. Burnet went further and linked an integral view of the Earth and the Universe to the original revelation that Aristotelianism had obscured.

Glanvill took his historical theory further than the Cambridge Platonists in claiming that the history of thought was an ensemble of contributions, each linked to the preceding one but still valid and comprehensible in its own right. All the progress in science and the development of scientific instruments and methods were not linked to a unitary flow of truth that affected everyone and related them to a single system. Glanvill, an apologist for the Royal Society, set great store on the Society's project for the scientific advancement of mankind, and in this context he perceived religion above all as extolling divine providence, which had given man such enormous powers of deduction and investigation (*Plus ultra*, pp. 137–49). Glanvill was averse to the notion that reason sprang from revelation. On the other hand, Gale and Burnet could not perceive any event in the history of philosophy as independent; they were all united by divine revelation. This revelation might vary with time, but it was always the unifying element. Glanvill did not see the progress of human thought as a product of the revelation or, if he did, he did not link all its elements together in the name of the original truth (cf. the discussion of prophecy in ch. 18 of *Plus Ultra*, pp. 128–37). These differences between the positions of Glanvill and those of More, Cudworth, and the two historians Gale and Burnet, show up the aspects of Neoplatonic philosophical historiography that were to limit its spread in many cultural circles. This constant reference to a unity of philosophical knowledge within history did not leave much room for the consideration of the contributions made by individuals or historical eras, and ended up by reducing all philosophical systems to the question of whether they adhered to the original truth or not.

It is not surprising therefore that the Cambridge Platonists produced only two authors of historiography of philosophy. Their concept of a history of revelation was extremely ambitious and discouraged other historians. To outline the history and theory of the entire development of revealed thought

required considerable intellectual powers which were capable of analysing the texts, interpreting them and then carrying out the synthesis. In *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, Cudworth made a half-hearted attempt at a history of ancient thought, but gave up after the first part unable to organize his scholarship properly. Gale managed to finish his work on ancient thought, but many chapters were affected by considerable vagueness. Although widely respected — Le Clerc and Leibniz were among its admirers — yet because Cudworth's work was based on both the study of revelation and on all of Greek and Oriental thought, even its translation was considered a formidable and risky enterprise fraught with theoretical difficulties. Le Clerc wrote in the preface to his extracts from *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* that its conceptual boldness and the breadth of the historical references were a nearly insurmountable obstacle to a translation from the English (BCh, II (1703), pp. v–vi, 'Advertissement'; also III (1704), p. 106).

It was not until 1733 that Johann Lorenz Mosheim (Moshemius) in Jena finally carried out a translation into Latin (*Systema intellectuale hujus universi, seu de veris naturae rerum originibus commentarii, quibus omnis eorum philosophia qui Deum esse negant funditus evertitur*, 2 vols. (Jena, 1733; 2nd edn, Leiden, 1773), thus introducing Cudworth's historical analyses to European culture. The work was prized for its scholarship, but Cudworth's overall view of the history of philosophy was not generally shared. Mosheim was unquestionably attracted by his apologetics for the Christian religion and his Platonic outlook, but he would not have undertaken such an arduous task of revision and translation solely in order to publicize ideas on the history of thought as a development from revelation. He was motivated by its usefulness to historical research, and because it gathered together material for a history of philosophy (see Mosheim's considerations in the 'Praefatio lectoribus' to his translation: Vol. I (Leiden, 1773), pp. xi–xl). Because of this translation, it had considerable diffusion in its Latin version. In the following century, there was even an Italian translation by L. Benedetti (Pavia, 1823–4, in 5 vols.), and the work was reprinted in the nineteenth century in England with Mosheim's notes translated into English: *The True Intellectual system of the Universe . . . To which are added, the notes and dissertations of Dr. J. L. Mosheim*, trans. John Harrison, 2 vols., with a copious general index to the whole work (London, 1845). On the other hand, *The Court of the Gentiles*, which was a true history of philosophy, was never translated because of the difficulty in checking and editing the material used in the general speculative theses that it put forward and defended. The diffusion of these important English historical works was bound up with the value of their historical research and not their philosophical theories. Thus Le Clerc's and Olearius' versions of Stanley's *History*, which had many parallels with Cudworth's work but lacked any theoretical basis, were circulating in Europe before *The*

True Intellectual System of the Universe, and Mosheim himself was slow in translating it because he had to overcome his diffidence towards its theoretical framework.

The historiography that the Cambridge School hoped to create was not very successful amongst scholars. Nobody wanted to follow Gale in his monumental task of reconstruction, which lacked the clarity that was normally associated with the new genre and exemplified in Stanley. In the eighteenth century, historians of philosophy substantially ignored the unitary concept with its religious and esoteric overtones, and thus tended to overlook the contribution this concept made in the move towards a historiography based upon the philosophical analysis of the schools and their systems. As a consequence, there has been a tendency to underestimate the importance of historical works by Cambridge Platonists. The historical reviews by Bréhier, Banfi, Rak, and Del Torre do not even mention them, and only Braun makes any attempt to evaluate their contribution. But the writings of Gale and Burnet, together with Cudworth's historical analyses, deserve more attention. They defined an approach that was to recur later in philosophical historiography, and which often claimed to be original. In this tradition, history becomes an integral part of the theoretical discussion. The history of individuals and their personal choices gives way to the history of doctrines as integral parts of a whole series of revelations in continuous development. The Cambridge Platonists did not see the doctrines as linked dialectically or review them systematically. Equally they did not perceive the history of philosophy *a priori* or as a unified logical and rational system, but worked from the premise that unity is not to be assumed but rather firmly established. The links between philosophical positions were not innate, and the struggle to reconcile a rational acceptance of revelation with divine inspiration introduced the concept of the development of thought, which the eighteenth century was to render more sophisticated and useful for critical purposes.

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1. THEOPHILUS GALE (1628-1678)

The Court of the Gentiles *Philosophia generalis*

1.1. Theophilus Gale (Galeus) was born in Kingsteignton, Devon, in 1628, receiving his early education from his father, a minister, and completing his studies at Oxford, where he decided to join the clergy. In 1647 he was admitted to Magdalen College, and in 1652 he obtained a *magister artium* degree. In spite of his Oxford and Nonconformist background, he became very sympathetic to the views of the Cambridge Platonists. In 1657 he was appointed a minister and preacher in Winchester, but in 1661, after refusing to submit to the Act of Uniformity because of his Nonconformist beliefs, he lost his post. Then he managed to find employment as a tutor to Lord Philip Wharton's two sons, with whom he travelled to the Protestant college at Caen in Normandy, after which he settled in London, where he was able to return to his philosophical and theological studies, partly because his papers were fortunately rescued from the Great Fire of 1666. He later moved to Newington Green as an assistant to John Rowe, who ministered to a Nonconformist congregation, and took over from him in 1677. Theophilus Gale died on 28 February or 1 March 1678.

1.2. In the past, the works of Theophilus Gale have often been confused with those of his contemporary Thomas Gale (1635-1702), a celebrated philologist whose enthusiasm for classical philosophy produced amongst other works a valuable edition of Iamblichus' *De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum*. Theophilus Gale, on the other hand, did not edit any classical Greek works and was primarily a writer of theological works that reflected his activities as a Nonconformist. These included: *A True Idea of Jansenisme, both Historick and Dogmatick* (London, 1669); *Theophilie; or a Discourse of the Saints Amitie with God in Christ* (London, 1671); *The Anatomie of Infedelitie; Or, an explication of the nature, causes and punishment of Unbelief* (London, 1672); *Idea theologiae, tam contemplativae, quam activae, ad formam S. Scripturae delineata* (London, 1673). He also had philosophical interests and developed fully worked-out historical and theological theories on human thought.

From these he produced two monumental works, one in English and one in Latin:

The Court of the Gentiles; or, a discourse touching the original of human literature, both philologic and philosophic, from the Scriptures and Jewish Churches, as also the vanity of pagan philosophic, and subservience of reformed philosophic to theologie, was published in 4 volumes. Vols. III and IV first appeared in London in 1667, Vols. I and II in Oxford in 1669 and 1671 respectively. A second edition was then produced: Vol. I appeared in Oxford in 1672, Vol. II in Oxford in 1676 and Vols. III and IV in London in 1677. *Philosophia generalis in duas partes determinata; una de ortu et progressu philosophiae . . . altera, de minorum gentium philosophis [etc.]* appeared in London in 1676 and was a parallel development to the theses contained in Vols. II and IV of *The Court of the Gentiles*.

In 1677 Gale conceived the idea of writing a *Lexicon Graeci Testamenti*, but his death a year later prevented him from publishing any of it. After having completed his monumental study on the influence of Jewish thought, he had intended to involve himself in a philological study of the Scriptures, whose philosophy he had discussed so thoroughly.

1.3. Theophilus Gale's view of the history of philosophy is clearly stated in *The Court of the Gentiles*. Gale develops the theory, the product of years of study, that all wisdom and every doctrine of which the classical world boasted had belonged to Hebrew thought and had been transmitted through various channels to the Greeks and barbarians (*The Court of the Gentiles*, Vol. I: *Of Philologie* (Oxford, 1672), 'Advertisements', pp. [1-4]). Every part of the work, every description and discussion is concerned with establishing the common source of all thought — Jewish wisdom as described by the Bible and other ancient works. In Gale's opinion, the Jews had not only preserved divine revelation with its monotheistic outlook and developed important prophecies and ethical concepts, they had been intensely involved in the propagation of their own doctrines. Gale asserts that the very success of these religious and philosophical doctrines proved that they were the product of divine revelation. He puts forward the theory of the complete unity of divine revelation, which could be either natural or supernatural but always flowed from the wisdom originating in God's action, which could manifest itself in different ways, yet always to a common purpose. It is significant that Bk. I, ch. 1 of *The Court of the Gentiles* opens with a description of God's Wisdom and Will and how they inspire wisdom in his creatures and the human arts and build the world of grace (*The Court of the Gentiles*, *Of Philologie*, pp. 4-7).

Gale states that philosophy was not the autonomous use of reason or the pure analysis of the natural world; it was a combination of study, contemplation, and tradition. God was the "first efficient cause" of philosophy, imprinting ideas in people's minds and creating the "objective light of nature" (*lumen naturae objectivum*). Thus natural law found its way into hearts and minds. God also imprinted the "subjective light" (*lumen subjectivum*) in the intellect, by which man might study and clarify the wisdom that had been instilled in him when the law had been founded. Thanks to this double gift, it was possible to perceive the inner law, which was the light, and study nature; while the intellect, not independently involved in the

world of experience, is linked to divine action. "From which it is clear that God is the *first efficient cause* (*Causam primam efficientem*), not only of supernatural cognition (*non solum cognitionis supernaturalis*), but also of natural Philosophy (*sed etiam Philosophiae naturalis*)" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 6).

Gale's fundamental preoccupation here was to set this position in contrast to that of the *philosophi novi*, Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, and the natural scientists. In his opinion, they had carelessly ignored the indivisibility of philosophy from theology or religious tradition, and forgotten that the philosopher's task was the integration of natural revelation, which was rational, and supernatural revelation, beyond the scope of reason. In the *Philosophia generalis*, he argues that Cartesian doubt had destroyed natural investigation in its theological context and had mocked philosophy enlightened by faith.

For from these criteria of truth (*criteriis veritatis*), how many monsters of new opinions are mingled in philosophy? And from these, with how many foreign and monstrous errors do their minds abound in theology? Indeed it is robbed of all sense of Divinity. They even ridicule the mysteries of faith, and, rashly excessive in their philosophical arrogance, they adorn their own reason with the spoils of God; and in order not to seem to act foolishly without Reason, they set up a rule and measure of faith. It is evident in our times, indeed more than evident, how widely this poison is creeping; and, it seems to me, no plague more pernicious is invading Religion, and nothing more opposed to the Christian faith (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. 4).

Atheism was the extreme consequence of this division between faith and reason, and needed to be fought against in order to re-establish the concept of philosophy and the use it was put to in ancient times, from the origins of humanity until the Greek philosophers and the Christian era.

But this is my proposition: to reduce Philosophy to its original exemplar and primeval Idea (*ad suum originarium exemplar primae-vamque Ideam reducere*), so that genuine Philosophy (*genuina Philosophia*) may be distinguished from the simulated and counterfeit, and the true sense of Philosophy from its abuse (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. 5).

Gale perceived the relationship between philosophy and revelation to be fundamental in ancient thought, and refused to ignore the link between the history of humanity, so dependant on divine revelations, and the history of wisdom and philosophy, equally subject to the inspiration of divine revelation. In *The Court of the Gentiles* and the *Philosophia generalis* he continually refers to Agostino Steuco's *De perenni philosophia*, well-known in the seventeenth century for its exhaustive review of ancient and Christian wisdom, philosophy, and religion, all linked to a common tradition originating from

divine revelation. This in itself is further proof that Gale wished to relate the fate of philosophy to a greater and perpetual revelation.

Gale drew inspiration from the theories of the Cambridge school. He did not share the political outlook of these philosophers, who were anti-puritan or at least not involved in the religious struggles, but he could not help agreeing with More's positions on the concept of revelation and its consequences. Gale defined his position in the following terms:

In the description of philosophy, we have said that it was given by God to the first parents, and through the succession of ages (*temporum successione*), it was handed down to us. On these things we agree, that not only the first lines, but especially the outlines (*lineamenta*) and more outstanding parts (*prastantiores partes*) of Ethnic Philosophy have been handed down through the hands of the first parents to the Gentiles and to the Hebrew Church (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 8).

Since its origins, humanity had carried out its philosophical activities naturally, by developing the potential meaning of the *lumen naturae objectivum* by means of the *lumen subjectivum*. For Gale this revelation was seen as an explicit act in the history of God's chosen people; it was very much the *prima philosophia*, the first direct revelation of the word of God. Divine revelation to Moses was the final act in the discovery of God and his law: "Hence it is abundantly agreed, even the philosophers themselves testifying, that the *first philosophy* is nothing other than the Word of God revealed through Moses and other hagiographers, whose very obscure [teachings] shone forth among the Heathen Philosophers" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 7).

With Moses the interconnection between the two revelations — natural wisdom before and after the Flood — formed an indissoluble link. The study of natural and supernatural realities no longer depended on the autonomy of the intellect; the Jews divided philosophy into three parts: rational, natural, and moral, and developed their philosophy through direct and indirect divine intervention. Following Eusebius, Gale states that Jewish rational philosophy was on the one hand "simple and dialectical" and on the other "symbolic and enigmatic". Natural philosophy was the study of "intelligible and incorporeal" as well as "perceptible" phenomena. Later the profound sense of revelation induced Jewish philosophers to define philosophy as Cabbala, which derived from the word for 'received' and signified a philosophy "received from God" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 31). Rational study combined with the acceptance of the Word to create a literature that was both inspired and guided by reason, as well as an exegesis that brought together searching speculation, textual analysis, and concern for religious beliefs and ceremony. Gale touches on various aspects of the Jewish religious schools in order to demonstrate this successful mix of creed, ritual, exegesis, and reason (*The Court of the Gentiles*, Vol. II, *Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie* (Oxford, 1676), pp. 20-23).

Gale believed that development of humanity's original revelation could not be understood outside Jewish history, because through it the doctrines of wisdom underwent a decisive clarification. Gale saw no purpose in viewing the expressions of the philosophy and wisdom of other peoples separately, since they could not have undergone such a complete development, while Jewish thought interrupted the evolution of every expression of merely natural philosophy, and summarized, clarified, and amplified the development of natural revelation. After this, it became the only means by which other peoples could develop their wisdom. Backing up his arguments with such historical and theological authorities as Vives, Vossius, Heinsius, Samuel Bochart, Edward Stillingfleet, Henry Hammond, and John Owen (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Philologie, 'Advertissements'*, p. [I]), he claimed that Jewish thought had left its stamp on the positive aspects of all the ancient peoples' philosophical expressions. The speculative deviations, errors, uncertainties, and abnormalities were all the product of thought that had distanced itself from Jewish wisdom.

The root cause of this deviation and the subsequent damage and misunderstandings was the fundamental corruption of human nature following original sin: "The first effect of original sin is the ignorance of the human mind." Ignorance is the source of all sins, including pride and self-sufficiency. Humanity had ignored whatever was left of the Word of God and fallen into the dark cave referred to by Plato (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 573-5). Philosophers were especially prone to the sin of pride, because in every age they always believed that they could create new systems and trample on those of their predecessors. Gale cited the example of Diogenes of Sinope who stamped on the ground where Plato was supposed to have lived and declared: "I trample on the inane study of Plato." He concludes that to listen to the voice of divine revelation required humility and not the arrogance of science so typical of the philosopher (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 586-7; see also *The Court of the Gentiles*, Vol. III, *The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated* (London, 1677), pp. 1-11). Errors were due to the misinterpretation of the way in which the Jews built upon the embryonic truths of the very earliest peoples. Because many philosophers attempted to develop doctrines from the few fragments that had been handed down and interpreted in many ways by those who were not enlightened by the word of God, they emphasized some aspects while overlooking others that were crucial to the understanding of God, nature, and man.

Although he does not expressly make the distinction, Gale outlined three ways reason was used to develop human thought in ancient times. The first was related to the acceptance of the doctrines directly revealed to the Jews by God, the second was the development of these directly revealed truths by non-Jews, and the third was the reference to those embryonic truths that had not been clarified by divine intervention and continued in their very form-

lessness to have a hold over the human mind. The peoples that had come into contact with the Jews (the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, and through these latter the Greeks) applied natural methods to doctrines that were not purely natural, and therefore their philosophy contained references to the supernatural. As well as being in contact with Jewish men of learning and those who continued their doctrinal traditions, these peoples were influenced by those who vaguely recalled the original revelation and had developed erroneous and uncertain doctrines from it. A conflict thus arose between doctrines and philosophical outlooks that often led to the defeat of authentic and revealed views and the triumph of error, or in some cases the contamination of the true doctrine by an erroneous or inadequate doctrine. Gale argues that the main purpose of scholarship was to disentangle the genuine contributions of Jewish thought from the tangle of errors in which it had become enmeshed, and to retrace truth's tortuous path through the centuries. He institutes a 'court' in which to try the philosophies of the pagans or 'Gentiles'. The title symbolizes the effort of the theologian and historian who, like a judge, pronounces sentence depending on the extent to which a pagan people and its philosophers were illuminated by the holy revelation.

Gale's views differed from More's in two ways, first over the necessity to separate truth and error, and second over the idea that many pagan doctrines did not conform to divine revelation. Gale does not accept the theory, which went back to Ficino, that there was a tradition of ancient wisdom that was naturally revealed. He accepted that there were flashes of truth in pagan thought, but this happened only through the influence of Jewish thought. Thus he did not accept the existence of *prisci theologi* working independently of Jewish thought — Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Aglaophemus, Pythagoras, Plato would have been nothing without Moses. He only went on to discuss these exponents of ancient wisdom after having illustrated the philosophy of Moses. He believed that the correct approach to their doctrines was to treat them as a mixture of true intuitions, revealed doctrines, and mistaken dogmas. However, Gale did not consider Jewish doctrines to be a *corpus* that developed separately from the uncertain progress of the pagans; indeed, he does not consider the Cabbala to be only valid for revealed truths within the system of Jewish wisdom. He believed that there had been no occult Jewish doctrines, but merely a succession of rational and symbolic methods of interpreting divine revelation. He accepts neither the Renaissance concept of the Cabbala nor More's more vague definition. There are no significant references to cabbalistic theology in *The Court of the Gentiles* or the *Philosophia generalis*; the only reference to the Cabbala is in Vol. III of *The Court of the Gentiles*, where he clearly identified this manifestation of medieval Jewish thought as a negative form of mysticism and the product of the harmful influence of Neoplatonism (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, pp. 117–19).

The search for authentic philosophy became very complex for Gale because he believed that there were no doctrinal genealogies, but simply a history of true and false doctrines that were intertwined. Gale therefore believed that a philosopher had to be extremely precise in his historical research, free from prejudices, and above all able to draw on a wide culture. True philosophy could be recognized by the truth that inspired it, or in other words by the presence of the Word of God. This was the living truth, and communicated to man the philosophy of God, the complete unfolding of reason. To be a philosopher has always meant to act within the Word — Plato, who perceived the image of the first truth, understood this. Christians understood it directly, because the Word of God was incarnate, and this became the absolute truth. Gale states that the study of true philosophy required a constant reference to this *optimum exemplar* and claims that it was the Word of God that discriminated between the study of the true and the false. The history of philosophy was thus required to separate the philosophies that aimed at the truth and overcome the *eidola*, recognizing their dependence on the Word of God, from those that do not. The Word of God was the inspiration, the guide, and the final objective of philosophy (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', pp. 5-6).

Gale's philosophy must therefore be defined as Christian, very much along the lines of Campanella and the Renaissance Platonists (especially Nicholas of Cusa, Ficino, and Steuco), in the sense that he accepts truths such as the Trinity, the Word of God, original sin, and providence as the product of biblical revelation, and he combines them with truths that were the product of rational argument — the transcendency of God, the Creation, and human free-will. When he speaks of "reformed philosophie" or *reformatanda philosophia*, he comes very close to the style and philosophical method of moderate reformers, particularly Grotius' irenicism and Melancthon's attempt at purification and mediation. He perceived Grotius' *De veritate religionis christianae* (Latin trans.; Leiden, 1627) as a defence of the originality and superiority of Jewish (or Mosaic) thought in antiquity (cf. Bk. 1). He was impressed by the ability of Grotius to synthesize Reformation theology with classical philosophy, and the Scriptures with the concept of philosophical progress, although he did have some reservations about Grotius' tendency, especially in the *Annotationes ad Novum Testamentum* (Paris, 1646-50), to use the Scriptures to back up arguments in favour of a reconciliation with the Church of Rome (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophy demonstrated*, 'Preface', pp. [9-12]). Gale unites the Church Fathers' fundamental Platonism and Steuco's eclectic Platonism with Calvinism's major themes. In his opinion, philosophy had to free itself from the strictures of purely secular knowledge if it wished to draw inspiration from Platonism (*The Court of the Gentiles*, Vol. iv, *Of Reformed Philosophie* (London, 1677), 'Preface', pp. [4-6]).

Above all, philosophy had to avoid those logical constructions that suffocated thought and deviated from the truth, a tendency that affected the early and medieval Church. Gale defines these principal deviations as mystical theology, Scholasticism, and the theology of the canonists. The framework in which these three deviations occurred was philosophical, and originated from the way in which pagan thought distorted Jewish doctrines. The history of philosophy thus became the critical instrument that could refute these errors, because it could evaluate the contributions of Jewish doctrines, their distortions, and the theoretical and practical considerations that brought these about. The mystic theology, for example, originated from the gnostic movement, which in turn took some of its ideas from Pythagorean philosophy. Many pernicious deviations, such as the Arian heresy, Pelagius' doctrines, and Origen's fanciful ideas, were the product of the dualist view of reality — the contrast between darkness and light, and the concept of emanation, which put forward a series of intermediate entities between God and the world. The history of the Church had been marked by the persistent reappearance of the tradition of gnostic mysticism. The Alexandrian school, by which he meant the Neoplatonists starting with Plotinus, had a decisive effect on this Christian tendency and supplied it with its speculative concepts and methods (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', pp. [5–7])

Only historiographical research through a profound knowledge of ancient thought could eradicate the errors of these mystical theologians. Gale promised to carry out such a task in the Preface to Vol. II of *The Court of the Gentiles* by analysing pagan doctrines in detail and laying bare their influence on the construction of a "bodie of Anti-christianisme: which was a *Complexum* of Heresies and Apostasies", which had contaminated the genuine Christian faith and culture (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [8]). In Vol. III, which refuted mystical theology, Gale demonstrated the usefulness of the previous chapter in clarifying heresy's tormented path through the history of the Church (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, pp. 123–48). He wished his historical analysis to include Scholasticism as well as the mystical Neoplatonic tradition. The former he defined as a speculative tradition developed from Aristotle through a multitude of commentators — a tradition that had been equally pernicious for the Church, which based all theological study on syllogistic disputes and the arguments of previous authorities (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, pp. 154–62). Its eventual defeat and the consequent primacy of the Pope in the Church were brought about by better knowledge of the true nature of Aristotle's doctrines and greater awareness of how they were distorted by Aristotelians (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', pp. [9–10]). A similar treatment is meted out to the "theology of

the canonists", the anti-Christian tendency within the Church which placed more importance on the canons and the superstitious worship of the saints than on the true faith (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, pp. 163–83). The analysis of pagan thought and its process of deification (apotheosis) uncovered the mistaken beliefs within the Church which had preferred the veneration of saints to the Word of God (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [10]).

The aim of historical research was religious — the general reform of Christian faith and culture. Thus, by recognizing its past errors, philosophy could become aware of the vanity of its claim to be an independent science. Throughout the history of the Church, there had been those like Tertullian who had warned against the dangers of philosophy, which has been the "chief Seminaire and Nurse of the main Errors" (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [6]). Philosophy therefore needed to return to its origins and identify the dangers inherent in its use without the inspiration of faith. For a Christian it was essential to recall the simplicity of Christ's message (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, 'Preface', pp. [1–9]). This typically humanist and Reformist reference to the true faith is effectively an appeal for the use of philological criticism and a renewed and simplified dialectic. Like Erasmus and Reuchlin before him, Gale felt that the true religious and philosophical reform was to be found in the restoration of a genuine understanding of the Scriptures.

Gale does not limit his history of Jewish doctrines and their development to a detailed study of their philosophy but also includes all the expressions of the Jewish thought that passed into the cultures of other people. His philological interests went further than the identification of doctrines and the discussion of philosophical texts and fragments, it also involved a study of the influence of the Jewish language and literature on other people. The "General Historie of Philosophie" is part of the "general idea" of philosophy, which it defines both chronologically and geographically (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Reformed Philosophie*, 'A Proemial Scheme of Reformed Philosophie', p. 1). The first part of *The Court of the Gentiles* is in fact concerned with the literature and language of the Hebrew people, from which all other languages derived some elements. He widens the discussion to include all expressions of ancient peoples, and in particular mythology, theogony, and cosmology. Gale goes into extremely detailed comparisons between the Jewish philosophical heritage and the various ways it had been adopted by other people and uses linguistic analysis to interpret Saturn, Jupiter, Juno, Bacchus, Apollo, Mercury, Hercules, and Vulcan as Greek theogonies distantly related to Jewish and Phoenician sapiential expressions (cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Philologie*, Bk. II, chs. 1–6).

Gale's critical method does not appear to promote religious tolerance. He opposes all purely rationalist interpretations like Socinianism, which he considered to derive from the Pelagian heresy (*The Court of the Gentiles, The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated*, 'Preface', pp. [9-12]). He did not think any of the Renaissance theories of natural religion to be practicable, maintaining that without the guiding light of revelation there could be no authentic religion. That there had been a natural revelation was relevant only in the context of the evolution of human wisdom, and this revelation was ultimately clarified by the direct revelation to the Jews. This implies that philosophy could never be superior to theology. Gale argues that only the word of God can constitute the model for philosophical investigation.

It is surely proper for us to embrace philosophy in such a way, that we ordain that it must be animated by the first philosophy (*prima philosophia*), that is, by the word of God, even as by its informing form (*sua forma informante*) (if I may use the words of the Aristotelians). Let Philosophy take the place of a handmaiden, provided that the Sacred page should occupy the regal throne (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. 8).

Reformation philosophy must be careful not to allow the word of God to be used or interpreted for speculative purposes or for the teaching of a particular individual. There must be no oaths *in verba magistri*, no *ipse dixit* with reference to Plato, Aristotle, or Descartes. Men of learning should carefully distinguish between the true and the false in various systems, without preferences or giving in to any of them (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. 9; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [11]).

For Gale, Eclecticism constitutes the best philosophical position for this approach. He defines Eclecticism as

surely the best method of philosophizing (*Optimus quidem philosophandi modus*), which yields the most beautiful fruits (*qui pulcherri-mos profert fructus*); which we have been busy pursuing (*quem . . . persequi satagemus*) throughout this general course in philosophy of ours. For just as bees settle on various flowers and yet only gather from those that which will be beneficial to them for their task, in the same way have we laboured to carry back from philosophies that which seems especially suitable for promoting the truth (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. 10).

Gale was practically forced to adopt this position, since he uses Vossius' historiography to justify the speculative basis of historical investigation. However his eclecticism takes on an added respect for the Scriptures establishing the pre-eminence of revelation over philosophy. Thus Eclecticism, having the same historical origins as the Alexandrian School, which had furnished Neoplatonism's approach to previous thought, demonstrated its

ability to perceive the Truth as it expanded and revealed itself and philosophies as partial reflections of that Truth (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 269–71). In this way, the eclectic method was used to identify the elements of truth in systems and philosophies, and the historian's work became that of selection (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [II]). "We strive to commend not errors but truth (*Non errores, sed veritatem commendare*), and to distinguish the false from the true" (*Philosophia generalis*, 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis', p. II). This eclectic method was markedly cautious in its reading of pagan texts. In the 'Dissertatiuncula proemialis' to the *Philosophia generalis*, Gale argues that this caution (*cautio*) lay at the very core of Christian philosophy; he backs up his arguments with frequent references to Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's austere and reformist requirements that appear in his *De studio divinae et humanae philosophiae*.

Gale views the history of philosophy as a dynamic relationship between divine revelation and human reason. There was no linear progress in philosophy, just a mixture of speculative elements produced by revelation and reason by itself — a fusion leading to both progress and regression, to the affirmation of both truths and errors. Progress however had accumulated and had been illuminated by divine revelation, through which Christ gave man the only real form of progress, his salvation. Before and after the coming of Christ, the purpose of philosophy was to prepare for an understanding of the truth, and it had carried out this task in changing circumstances. Gale decided, therefore, to concentrate on ancient thought and its history in both *The Court of the Gentiles* and the *Philosophia generalis*, as he felt that this period best illustrated clearly the way philosophy progressed and regressed. He could see no point in studying the history of Scholasticism and modern thought — in these periods pagan thought had had a negative influence on the Church and Christian theologians.

According to Gale, the recurrence of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, as well as the development of obscure methodologies (such as Scholasticism) or naturalistic methodologies (like Cartesianism), reintroduced the most harmful aspects of pagan thought and did not contribute to any philosophical innovations. The arguments adopted in the third volume of *The Court of the Gentiles* tend to show the usefulness of those doctrines existing before the Church Fathers. In his illustration of the history of ancient thought, Gale occasionally mentions and briefly discusses recent developments, only to dismiss them as unoriginal and not worthy of consideration by themselves. In the theoretical arguments of the *Philosophia generalis* and the fourth volume of *The Court of the Gentiles*, he completes his overview of medieval, Renaissance, and contemporary thought from the standpoint of a religious reform that eliminated the dangerous influences of paganism. The preface to the fourth volume of *The*

Court of the Gentiles includes an interesting, if brief, résumé of early reformist movements in the Renaissance, starting with Wyclif, finishing with Ramus and Jansen, and with references to such figures as Huss and Savonarola as well as various humanists and reformers (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Reformed Philosophie, Preface*).

1.4. *The Court of the Gentiles* *Philosophia generalis*

1.4.1. As has already been stated, Gale's historical research is set out in *The Court of the Gentiles*, and its results are partly summarized and partly amplified in the first part of *Philosophia generalis*, which is somewhat clearer as a history of human thought. The historical theory is identical in both, as is the order in which the arguments are developed. We therefore think it opportune to analyse the historical content and the external structure of both works together.

The Court of the Gentiles is divided into four parts, each consisting of one volume. The second edition of 1672–7 has been used here. It does not appear from our research that the first edition was in Latin, as is claimed by Morhof, *Polyhistor practicus*, Vol. v, § 2, p. 525 (and picked up by Braun, p. 73, who even gives the title *Aula deorum gentilium*). The first edition of the first part, entitled *Of Philologie*, was published in Oxford in 1669, and the second, revised and enlarged edition also in Oxford in 1672 (printed by H. Hall for Thomas Gilbert). It deals with "Human Literature" as it had been derived from the wisdom of the Jews: in Bk. I with the language of ancient peoples and in Bks. II and III with the mythology, theology, historical concepts, ethics, and rhetoric of these peoples, all viewed in relation to their derivation from the Jews. There are wide-ranging historical and philosophical references, especially in the second book, which discusses pagan theology, cosmogony, and natural philosophy — the cross-references between the doctrines of Plato and Moses are particularly detailed.

We shall be dealing mainly with the second part, entitled *Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, and have consulted the second edition (printed by J. Macock for Thomas Gilbert, 512 pp.; London, 1676), which came out after the publication of *Philosophia generalis*. It begins with an 11-page Preface and two poems (one in Latin, *In opus hoc eruditione parti, ac industria elaboratum*, and the other in English, *On the Second Part of this Learned Worke*) and is divided into 4 Books: I, 'Of Oriental and Occidental Barbaric Philosophie'; II, 'The Origine of the Ionic, but chiefly of the Italic, or Pythagoric Philosophie'; III, 'Of Socratic and Platonic Philosophie'; IV, 'Of Aristotelic, Cynic, Stoic, Sceptic and Epicurean Philosophie'. Each book is divided into lengthy chapters preceded by summaries. Each chapter is in turn divided into a number of paragraphs (on average about 10). Notes in the margins refer to the subject of the paragraph. Most quotations are in English, but there are also some in Greek followed by English translations, and a few Latin quotations in the margins.

The third part is entitled: *The vanity of pagan philosophie demonstrated from its causes, parts, properties and effects; namely pagan idolatry, Judaic Apostasie, Gnostic Infusions, Errors among the Greek Fathers, specially Origen, Arianisme, Pelagianisme, and the whole Systeme of Papisme or Antichristisme, distributed into three parts, Mystic, Scholastic and Canonic Theologie*. The second edition was published in London by A. Maxwell and R. Roberts in 1677. The tone is generally polemical and confutative, making ample use

of the historical and philosophical arguments used in the previous part and enlarging upon its historical study of the Church Fathers (Origen), Gnosticism, and Scholasticism. The material is divided up as follows: Bk. 1: the vanity of pagan philosophy, its causes (ch. 1), its parts (chs. 2–3), and its forms (ch. 4); Bk. 11: the vanity of pagan philosophy and its effects — idolatry, Jewish apostasy, and the errors of the early Church (ch. 1), and how its anti-Christian views revealed themselves in mystical theology, Scholastic theology, and canonic theology and whose concrete effect, on a political and ecclesiastical level, was the primacy of the Pope (ch. 2, divided into 4 sections).

The fourth part is entitled *Of Reformed Philosophie: Wherein Plato's Moral, and Metaphysic or prime Philosophie is reduced to an useful Forme and Method*. The second edition that we looked at appeared in London, printed by J. Macock, in 1677. A systematic review of 'Reformed Philosophie', preceded by the 'Proemial Scheme of the reformed philosophie' (pp. 1–14), it is divided into 2 Books — one dealing with moral philosophy and the other with metaphysics.

We shall be examining the first three of the four parts that make up *The Court of Gentiles*, following the order and method of the second part, which is explicitly concerned with the history of ancient thought. At the same time we shall follow the historical and philosophical arguments of *Philosophia generalis*, choosing what we consider to be the more significant texts from both works. The quotations from *Philosophia generalis* will be more frequent, since it is more succinct.

The Latin work has a long and informative title: *Philosophia generalis in duas partes disterninata. Una de ortu et progressu philosophiae, eiusque traductione a sacris fontibus: in qua fusius tractatur de philosophia platonica. Altera: 1) de minorum gentium philosophis; 2) de novem habitibus intellectualibus; 3) de philosophiae obiecto, subiecto, finibus, adiunctis, discrimine a theologia, praestantia, effectis, corruptione, recto usus, partibus, necnon philosophorum caracteribus et officiis*. It was published in 1676 by J. Robinson and J. Macock. Most of it (754 pp.) deals with "the origin and development of philosophy" (*de ortu et progressu philosophiae*), and refers initially to barbarian and Greek classical thought, in particular Plato, and then to the 'less important' sects, amongst which he includes the Peripatetics, Cynics, Stoics, Sceptics, and Epicureans. The remaining pages (755–946) outline the new 'reformed' philosophy. The work is introduced by the 12-page 'Dissertationucula proemialis philosophiae candidatis dicata' and an index (*Breviarium rerum*). The first part, 'De ortu ac progressu philosophiae', is divided into three Books: I, 'De philosophia Prima ac Barbarica'; II, 'De philosophia Ionica et Italica'; III, 'De Philosophia Socratica et Platonica'. These in turn are divided into chapters, and, in the case of Bk. III, also into sections. The second part is made up of three Books: I, 'De Minorum Gentium Philosophis'; II, 'De Novem Habitibus Intellectualibus'; III does not have a title, but deals with the matters mentioned in point (3) of the title of the whole work. In Bks. II–III, several chapters are divided into sections. Each chapter is generally divided into paragraphs which are on average about three pages in length. There are no footnotes or notes in the margin; all references are within the body of the text.

1.4.2. The periodization of the history of human thought starts, according to Gale, with the speculations of Adam, who had received the gift of reason together with the natural revelation of the order of reality. After the original sin, the darkness of idolatry and ignorance obscured the philosophical practice pursued by Seth, Enoch, and Methuselah. Noah and his family carried the tradition to a higher level, which finally became ennobled by Abraham.

The line of 'sacred' philosophers continued in Egypt through Joseph (whom the Greeks identified with Hermes Trismegistus) and Moses. The latter was the author of the first true philosophy, which then spread amongst other peoples and in particular to the Greeks. Gale considered the other Jewish philosophers to be Solomon, whose wisdom was well-known to Greek thinkers, Job, Ezra, and the Essenes. Jewish philosophy organized itself into true and proper schools to study and comment on the Scriptures.

According to Gale, the Egyptians were the first people to be introduced to the *prima philosophia* and were by far the most successful at developing this philosophy and passing it on, especially to the Greeks. The Phoenicians, Chaldeans, and Persians were in close contact with the Jews, and Jewish influence also spread indirectly to the Indians, Phrygians, Libyans, Ethiopians, Scythians, Thracians, Hispanics, Britons, and Gauls (Druids). However, it had been the Greeks who were most influenced by Jewish thought. Amongst the early thinkers were Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Protagoras, and Pherecydes. Then came Pythagoras, who drew all his inspiration from Oriental thought. The Eleatic thinkers (Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus) followed his Jewish doctrines. After this, Socrates introduced moral speculation and thus encouraged Plato to investigate all the Oriental sources.

Seen this way, Platonic philosophy was the high point of Greek thought, having a decisive influence on all successive thought and creating a school tradition that carried on long after the Academy (to which Gale dedicates only 7 lines of *Philosophia generalis* (p. 690) and 5 pages of *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie* (pp. 257–61)) and the various post-Platonic sects (Aristotle's Lyceum, the Cynics, the Stoics, the Sceptics, and the Epicureans). Gale's discussion of the Platonic tradition is, however, limited to classical Neoplatonism — the Alexandrian school with Potamon at the time of Tiberius, and then Plutarch, Philo, Ammonius, Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, Proclus, John Philoponus, Alcinous, Apuleius, and Calcidius. Gale is aware of the influence of Ammonius on Plotinus and Origen, and briefly refers to the latter's Christian Neoplatonism, which he thought should not be confused with the Platonism of the Church Fathers, who had been much more careful and tried to avoid the influence of Alexandrian mysticism (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 271–5). The Platonism that continued to have vitality was the one in the tradition of the Church Fathers, which continued throughout the Middle Ages, but in Vol. II of *The Court of the Gentiles* Gale does not deal with it directly, preferring to leave it to Vol. III. There he severely criticizes Christian deviations to authentic Platonic thought found in Clement of Alexandria and St Augustine or, in modern times, in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Vives, and Steuco.

1.4.3. The principal historical theme that emerges from the heart of Gale's works is the relationship between philosophy and wisdom (*sapientia*) in ancient thought. Gale's analysis of this relationship is based on the close link he perceived between study and revelation, and between rational investigation and inspired investigation. He could see no historical problem in comparing Oriental wisdoms with Greek philosophy, as they all involved human endeavour, whether speculative or practical, rational or religious. Thus, in the *Philosophia generalis*, there is no distinction made between the philosophical and the sapiential. Instead of beginning with a definition of wisdom, as Hornius and Stanley had, Gale immediately takes up the definition of philosophy, a term that "owes its origin to the modesty of Pythagoras" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 1). He saw no difference between the wise man and the philosopher: the latter term was simply a better and more precise way of defining those whose activities had also been carried out by the former.

The origin of the words 'philosophy' and 'wisdom' could be found only in the Jewish people. According to Gale, the Latin *sapientes* and the Greek *sophoi* derive from the Hebrew term *Sophim* meaning *speculatores*, those who had dedicated their lives to pure study, contemplation, and the observation of reality. He thought all other etymologies (such as Hornius' based on *sufes*) are much less likely; agreeing with Heinsius, Gale states that "the word *sophos* [wise] was derived among the Greeks, because *sophoi* [wise men] were accustomed in such lofty places to observe (*speculari*) or contemplate the heavenly bodies and their motions and courses" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 2; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 1-4). The term 'philosophy' meant the study of higher things and the attitude to be adopted in this quest. Platonic philosophy made the relationship very clear between the quest for truth and the love of the quest itself. Philosophy is defined as "the appetite for knowing everlasting things that are regarded in the same way". Gale refines the definition, by stating that philosophy is "the infinite capacity of the human intellect and the natural inclination for acquiring knowledge" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 4).

There is a similar tension in Man, who knows no limits and never pauses in his activities, and cannot perceive God simply as an objective and a purpose. Man also needs to perceive God as the origin and the natural and direct cause. Thus Gale completes his definition of philosophy:

Philosophy is the natural knowledge of things notional, natural, moral, and supernatural, (*Philosophia est rerum Notionalium, Naturalium, Moraliū ac supernaturalium cognitio naturalis*) given by God to the first parents, and handed down to us over the succession of ages, to the end of reverence towards the Creator and the good of the Universe (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 4).

Philosophy is a 'concession' as well as 'natural knowledge'; indeed, know-

ledge by its very nature can be created only by the will of God. The sapiential element of philosophy is defined not so much by the scope of the subject under investigation as by the method through which it is carried out. This double meaning of the sapiential affects the development of philosophy, which is handed down through the spread of doctrines and attitudes of a revealed nature, rather than by mere comparison and rational learning.

So philosophy was not the outcome of a series of 'successions' or the division between wisdom and sophistry, but had been dominated by the exchange of doctrines between peoples and cultural environments, and the gradual corruption of its original message. Gale considered Adam and Moses to have been the key elements in divine revelation. In the first case — which occurred before the Fall — all knowledge was revealed:

And thus to Adam had fallen in the Creation the highest wisdom and the most exquisite knowledge (*exquisitissima scientia*) of divine and human affairs, so that he could penetrate very perspicaciously into the most recondite mysteries of Nature, and he could make very accurate judgements about its powers, use, and efficacy (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 10; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, pp. 7–8).

In the second, divine revelation became explicit doctrine which dealt with the history of the world, the laws and morality, sacrifice, the prime realities, and finally the formulation of a suitable understanding of God as a 'Being in itself' (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 18–21). It was this second revelation that was to influence the philosophies of other peoples, and because of the richness of its formulations it was to play a crucial role in the development of Egyptian, Phoenician, and Greek thought (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, pp. 15–18). Thus the model for non-Jews was to be the philosophy developed within the Jewish people and not what preceded its consolidation (represented by Adam, Noah, and Joseph).

According to Gale, the very concept of 'barbarian', i.e. 'that which is foreign, which stands outside' was formulated by the Jews, and even here the Greeks could not claim any philosophical superiority other than in their delegated role by which they transmitted philosophical ideas to others (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 32). Clearly the Jews felt superior to other peoples, and this attitude was passed on to the Greeks, who curiously considered the Jews to be barbarian, even though they had adopted the majority of their doctrines. Gale speculated that this had been due to the fact that the Greeks received many Jewish doctrines indirectly through other Oriental peoples. In any case, the Church Fathers agreed that Jewish philosophy had the leading role compared with the mass of barbarian philosophies, and that Greek philosophy had been completely dependent on these philosophies (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 33–5).

The development of elements of Jewish wisdom among all the Oriental

peoples did not always follow mechanically — according to Gale, ethnic characteristics were decisive in the way Jewish principles were elaborated. The Egyptians were an interesting case in point: they had been the first to take up the study of mathematics, which they considered to be a preparation for the study of divinity and of natural and moral philosophy. The Jews had not developed mathematics, while the Egyptians went on to study astronomy, arithmetic, music, mechanics, and architecture (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 37–8). However, while the Egyptians had followed the Jewish example in natural speculation, dividing the world into the Archetypal, the Angelic, and the Sensible, their mythical representation of these different worlds was their own. Their archetypal world of divine order was associated with Osiris, while the angelic world of genii, demons, or spiritual intermediaries was associated with Isis, and the sensible or natural world (which in turn had been divided into the sidereal and the elementary, and was governed by the Earth's soul) was associated with Horus (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 52–7). In moral speculations (ethics, economics, and politics), the Egyptians relied on proverbs and allegories, which made special use of animal characteristics (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 63–7). In theology, they accepted the Jewish view of God as Being and Unity, bringing to this some important qualifications: they conceived of divinity as necessity, impassability, immutability, simplicity, incorporeality, infinity. They even came to define the trinitarian existence of God, and symbolized it as a globe with a snake and a wing (here Gale follows Steuco's interpretation). They deepened their understanding of the Ideas in God and perceived Divine Providence as reason and harmony in the workings of the world (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 67–79; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophy*, pp. 30–33).

Their independence in the development of philosophy led the Egyptians into many errors. For Gale, the most important of these was their concept of demons as intermediary beings and mediators — a concept based on a misunderstanding of the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah. Indeed, they raised a man, Hermes Trismegistus (who historically was Joseph, the Jewish teacher who represented wisdom for the Egyptians) to the status of the “mediator of the human race”. Gale even talks of “a certain satanic imitation of the true Messiah”, emphasizing that this false doctrine was the work of the devil. However, he does not go into any explanations, giving the impression that this temptation had been constantly present in the history of philosophy — he views the worshipping of saints in the Catholic Church as a very similar phenomenon (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 79–82).

Egyptian philosophy populated the universe with souls whose origin and destiny were seen in terms of an essential derivation from and inevitable return to God. Gale asserts that this *deliramentum* led to the theory of metempsychosis or the transmigration of souls, which was to become the model for Pythagoras and Plato (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 82–5). Egyptian

thought swung between two poles: it deviated from the truth under satanic influences or because of inattention to revealed doctrines, but also usefully developed the germs of truth brought to the Egyptians by the Jews. Their worship involved both highly spiritual precepts and the rituals of Satan, "an avid emulator of the divine cult". Worship can be either "simple and mental" or "symbolic and corporeal". These opposing attitudes led equally to an outpouring of contemplative purity and to foul rituals and magical practices. The main objective of Egyptian philosophy and religion was "blessed and divine union between God and purified souls", that is the salvation of the soul through God. However, this concept was developed without a proper understanding of the relationship between God and man, and in the belief that man could come to know God and unite with Him through contemplation.

This divine union of the human mind was a certain imitation, but a superstitious and blasphemous one, of the primeval Theology that flourished among the Hebrews. For just as the sacred page establishes the union and communion of the blessed with God as Vision, Fruition, and Adoration, so did Egyptian Theology place its own divine union and communion in the Knowledge and Adoration of God (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 97).

The sincere desire for salvation and a noble view of mankind were thwarted by a mysticism that overlooked the differences between man and God and considered the soul's fate to be inevitable. This was the first manifestation of the tendency to misunderstand man's destiny and divine omnipotence, a tendency that was to lead to 'mystical theology' (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 98).

These attacks on the Egyptians' false doctrines do not mean that Gale does not value the uniqueness of their thought and method. The Church Fathers had considerable respect for the symbolic method of philosophy and the use of hieroglyphics, which had originated from the Jews (from Joseph and Moses), and they further developed it (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecoan Philosophie*, pp. 33-7). Egyptian symbolism, which Iamblichus described in detail (he was Gale's main source for Egyptian philosophy), influenced other peoples, and in particular Greek (Pythagoras and Plato) and Alexandrian thought. The Egyptians excelled in the creation of types, enigmas, parables, allegories, and hieroglyphics. They had two ways of illustrating their 'mysteries': one "by the virtues of animals and plants", the other "by geometric figures" (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 98-114). The priests in Egypt were professional philosophers and were able, according to Gale, to develop usefully some aspects of Jewish philosophical practice, thus becoming an example to later philosophical disciplines. The Greek thinkers, interested in the self-discipline of philosophical study, were attracted by the Egyptian priests' abstinence and temperance, and by their care

in contemplation and the rigid rules that linked their actions and the breadth of their interests (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 114–24).

Thus Egyptian thought created the Alexandrian school by adopting the Jewish method for disseminating philosophical ideas. This school was the result of a coming together of the most important doctrines of revelation and Egyptian wisdom (with added developments of Greek thought: cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 43–4). Gale views the Egyptian environment as conducive to the development of Neoplatonism — an eminently theological philosophy concerned with revelation. Like the Christian doctrines, the truth of Jewish thought was extremely accessible.

For truly this Alexandrian school never flourished more (*Verum enimvero Schola haec Alexandrina numquam magis floruit*) than in the times of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, when not only the Septuagint Greek version [of the Old Testament] but even the doctrine of our Lord and his disciples was expounded and illuminated (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 126).

Gale is much less detailed in his treatment of the other Oriental peoples, as he believed that he had demonstrated at length the transmission of Jewish wisdom to the most important of the barbarian peoples, who had then been responsible for the spread of many doctrines. He gives a slightly more detailed description of the Phoenicians, discussing the direct influence of Moses' thought on the philosopher and historian Sanchuniathon (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 50–60) and the philosopher and physician Mochos. According to Gale, the latter developed a corpuscular theory very similar to the one expressed by Moses in Genesis 1: 10 (Gale does not, however, consider Moses' and Mochos' ideas to be exactly the same: cf. *Philosophia generalis*, pp. 132–4, and *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 60–62). Gale deals briefly with the Chaldeans, whom he considered more ancient than the Egyptians (Chaldean philosophy went back to the time of Abraham). Their doctrines had not been so rich and complex, because they had only concentrated on astronomy, which soon deteriorated into judicial astrology (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 69–70). This version allowed him to ignore Zoroaster and all the theological and natural doctrines that could have been inferred from the *Chaldean Oracles* (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 134–9). With the Persians, he limited himself to the wisdom of the Magi and the distorted doctrines they introduced on divination and the transmigration of souls, referring to their founder Zoroaster. However, he says nothing about the latter's doctrine and personality, there being no reliable sources (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 141–3; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 77–8). Gale considers the Druids (Gauls and Britons) to have drawn their doctrines both indirectly from

divine revelation to the first men and from Jewish and Phoenician philosophy (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 148-9; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 82-7). He also takes a cursory look at Indian philosophy (the Gymnosophists and Brahmins), without attempting to establish links with Jewish thought or other Oriental philosophies (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 78-80).

For Gale the key event in the history of philosophy was the translation of Jewish thought into Greek thought — the central theme in *The Court of the Gentiles*. As he interpreted it, the importance of the Greeks arose both from their ability to assimilate barbarian doctrines and from the vitality of their interests. While the Greeks did not create any new doctrines or world-views, taking doctrines and suggestions from other peoples, they often distorted the very doctrines they adopted, or subjected them to the pressures of dialectical exercises. On the one hand, Gale praises Greek thought as a meeting point between many different philosophical traditions, and on the other criticizes it for having suffocated their authenticity. He uses the historical accounts of Clement of Alexander and Eusebius for the Church Fathers and those of Gianfrancesco Pico, Vives, Steuco, Vossius, Heinsius, Hornius, and Raleigh for more recent times, to demonstrate how Greek thinkers assimilated the thought of others and how original was Jewish thought (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 154-9).

Given this premise, Gale has little to say about early Greek wisdom and mythical thought, in Vol. II of *The Court of the Gentiles*. Greek thought is never viewed as having gone through an independent stage, since Orpheus, Linus, Homer, and Hesiod are described as simply echoing Egyptian fables (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 97-100), while the symbolic methods of the Greek poets and sages are seen to be derived from the Jewish tradition of "parables, types, and allegories". According to Gale, the reasons for this unconscious use of poetic symbolism are to be found in "ignorance", "admiration" for the surrounding reality, "imitation", "curiosity", and "arrogance" (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 103-12). He described Thales, the founder of Ionic philosophy, as the first true philosopher, because he had been the first who consciously introduced the Mosaic and Phoenician philosophies into Ionia. His doctrines on natural philosophy, his concept of water as the principle of all things, and his theology, all proved that he knew how to bring together Jewish, Phoenician, and Egyptian elements (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 159-61; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 115-22). Pherecydes was also inspired by Phoenician thought and became involved in theological speculations based on a geometrical symbolic method (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 161-5; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 125-8).

Pherecydes was Pythagoras' teacher, and induced him to study Oriental

thought in depth; the results took Greek thought to an advanced level. Gale demonstrates that all contacts between Pythagoras and Oriental peoples led to a deeper understanding of the principal source, Jewish thought. He studied the philosophy of Mocho with the Phoenicians (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 135-6), philosophical method with Egyptian priests (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 136-7), astronomy with the Chaldeans, and the secrets of magic with the Persian magi (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 137-9; *Philosophia generalis*, pp. 165-9). Traces of divine revelation still remain in Pythagoras' thought: he conceived God as "a most simple Being (*ens simplicissimus*)", one, cause, providence (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 183-7). Pythagoras understood the transmigration of (immortal) souls in an allegorical rather than an actual sense, referring to the final resurrection of the body, in the same way as the Jews (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 198-9). He perceived virtue as 'harmony' (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 175-6; on all these points, cf. *Philosophia generalis*, pp. 172-8). The symbolic form of his philosophy recalled the philosophy of the Jews, because its most important symbols are to be found in the Bible (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 201-10; *Philosophia generalis*, pp. 179-83), and the Pythagorean communal life was very similar to the organization of the Jewish schools and the Jewish priests' way of life in general (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 183-6; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 150-65).

Gale's interpretation is by now clear. What distinguished Greek thought and elevated it above that of other peoples was not the development of unaided reason and of research into nature, ethics, and metaphysics divorced from religious feeling, but the development of all those elements of wisdom present in the Oriental peoples that reflected deep religious feeling, bold and symbolic theological views, and an ethics based on aphorisms. Gale overturns the attitude held by Stanley and Vossius towards reason in Greek thought and its development with respect to Oriental thought; unaided reason became for Greek thought a temptation to self-sufficiency that ended up suffocating divine philosophy. All the same, Gale gives a privileged position to Socrates and Plato, because they put reason within the context of the development of a wisdom that viewed natural philosophy through the eyes of divine revelation and consequently took personal witness into account. Gale points out that Socrates had the task of preparing Plato's philosophical synthesis by interlinking metaphysical considerations (on God and death), moral considerations (on virtue and the Devil), and the questions of virtuous practice and philosophical study (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 220-23). However, he does not mention any Oriental or Jewish influences on Socrates' development; thus the

importance of Socrates was purely in his exemplary life and as the catalyst that launched Plato on his study of all sources of wisdom.

According to Gale, Plato had a decisive role in Greek thought — Jewish philosophy influenced him both directly through his travels in Egypt and Phoenicia and his contacts with Jewish philosophers, and indirectly through the Pythagorean school (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 247–54). His thought reflected a profound revelation when he asserted that language derived from Jewish wisdom, that the true knowledge of the one and infinite God could only be revealed by God Himself, that in the beginning man was happy and gifted with perfect wisdom, that the soul was immortal, and that the first man had been created by God out of the earth (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 192–5). Furthermore, his method of investigation and exposition adopted the symbolic method of Jewish philosophy (through Pythagoras; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 276–9), and his analysis through dialogue, dialectic, and the art of interrogation was also typical of the Jewish schools (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 279–83). Having clearly established the influence of Jewish biblical thought on the Platonic dialogues, Gale proceeds to investigate how this transmission of divine revelation into Greek thought took place. He develops a working hypothesis that distinguishes between dialectical philosophy and essential or real philosophy, which in turn is divided into Natural, Moral, and Metaphysical philosophies. This last subdivision became a kind of compendium of all the Jewish and Oriental influences and all the preceding developments of Greek thought (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 289–91).

According to Gale, Plato benefited from divine revelation in natural philosophy, logic, and ethics, and was able bring all these together harmoniously, thus creating an overall philosophical outlook (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 199). Plato's organic synthesis created philosophical tools (i.e. dialectics) in order to find the best possible means of developing revealed doctrines. He was thus able to trace the eastern schools and their disciplines back to a single body of thought. In essence, the Greek thinker displayed all the various stages of divine revelation, but in his own order. Gale starts his account with the universe and inanimate beings, he then moves on to man, the microcosm, to the dynamic of his essence and action, society as a whole, and finally God, the reason and purpose of all things and worthy of honour and worship.

Metaphysics, which constituted the high point of Platonic philosophy, was also seen as the area in which the influence of Moses was most directly felt. Gale discusses it in *Philosophia generalis*, at the end of an extremely detailed commentary on Greek philosophy, but he could well have used it to back up his arguments on the direct transference of the Jewish concept of

God into Platonic thought. Indeed Plato's theology in the *Parmenides* described God as Being, One, simplicity, immortality, the centre and circumference of all things (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 659–68). Plato accepted that divine providence was at work in the world (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 669–74), believing that God needed to be worshipped in spirit and truth (with simplicity and purity), and that therefore religion was both legitimate and necessary (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 675–81; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 419–20). Plato also took on the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah or intermediary, but he modified it into the concept of daemons — more than one intermediary between man and God. As with Egyptian thought, this concept had a pernicious influence on the Church and encouraged the tendency to deify the saints (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 682–6).

In Gale's opinion, the starting point for the essential Platonic thought was physics, i.e. the doctrine of the World's creation and its properties, as taken from Moses. In the *Timaeus* Plato gives precedence over all other arguments to somatic physics, which dealt with "the genesis or origin of the Universe" (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 200–201). This demonstrated how Platonic physics could not be isolated from the doctrines of the exemplars of Creation, i.e. from the Ideas, from prime matter, and from the World soul (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 320–31). Gale discussed these fundamental concepts at length in order to demonstrate that Reformation philosophy would be best served by a return to Platonic physics, which drew upon Mosaic thought on the basis of revelation. The Ideas, matter, and the World soul reflected a religious interpretation of reality that was capable of defeating atheism. Gale does not perceive the theory of the World soul as clashing with the Christian view, as did many sixteenth-century theologians (even those who condemned Bruno). The fundamental reason for this is that he gave the World soul the significance of a soul "uncreated and divine, truly the Spirit of God inhabiting, ruling, cherishing all things", that is God's presence in the World, and also the significance of "a natural [soul], indeed a certain fiery power that is diffused through all parts of the Universe, nourishing, cherishing, and generating things in various ways for their various natures" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 209).

Gale explains Platonic physics in great detail and with systematic references not only to the *Timaeus*, but to all the dialogues. As he describes it, there were the four traditional elements: fire, air, water, and earth. However there were three types of fire: light that did not burn, potential fire that did not shine, and fire that also shone (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 210–16). Plato's physics put fire in a central position, and this was confirmed by the fact that the most perfect heaven, the Empyrean, consisted of light and fire (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 227–9; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 346–7). A succession of various physical realities demon-

strated the dependence of all things on the workings of the most noble element, which was divine in the sense that it derived directly from God's will and governed all things by penetrating them. Gale then describes the terrestrial realities as they are presented in the dialogues, referring to the Scriptures and giving emphasis on this organic, teleological, and hierarchical view of the world. The detailed analysis of metals and their nature (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 266–303) should be sufficient to show that Gale wished to link Platonism with moderate alchemy, which could be usefully brought into agreement with Christian theology.

As Gale develops his description of Plato's physics, it becomes increasingly clear that he is attempting a *summa* of an organic and teleological view of man and the universe that contrasts with Aristotelian naturalism and the materialism of contemporary philosophers. Leaving aside pure descriptions, his arguments on animals and those that follow become increasingly anti-materialist, drawing exclusively on Moses, Plato, and the Platonic tradition. For example, when discussing the nature of an animal's soul, he argues that in Platonic tradition it was igneous. He immediately turns to refuting the Cartesian thesis that animals were "pure automata or machines alien to feeling and perception". He defines this position as "indeed a fine and artificial hypothesis (*bella quidem et artificiosa hypothesis*)" and rejects it in favour of the Platonic interpretation of the universe as succession of living and feeling beings at different levels (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 322–3).

Gale adopts the doctrines of Renaissance Platonism that perceived man as the microcosm and "the most excellent (*praestantissimum*) animal", seen as tripartite into body (*corpus*), soul (*anima*), and spirit (*spiritus*) (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 352–3; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 374–6). He also added to this part a medical discussion, in which the health of the body was seen to be inseparable from man in his totality (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 360–66; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 376–82). Here he also attributes to Plato (and Aristotle!) the hypothesis on blood circulation that Harvey had recently introduced to the English scientific world (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 361). On the creation of the human soul, Gale compares the Mosaic and Platonic concepts and comes up with some differences, but still insists that both thinkers worked on the common premiss of the human mind's direct origin from a divine act of creation. The fact that for Plato the creation of the body was delegated to lesser deities did not detract from the fact that the mind was created directly by God without the use of matter (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 367–73). It is significant that the analysis of Platonic natural philosophy is concluded with a summary entitled 'De mundi perfectione', in which Gale argues that the most important element taken from the Mosaic perception is its teleological position. Thus Plato accepted the conception of the harmony of the World, man's fall, divine reward and punishment, the Last

Judgement, and the final conflagration — all elements that reinforced a unitary perception of the World (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 423-9).

In his treatment of Platonic ethics in *Philosophia generalis*, Gale is motivated by his strong theological interests, wishing to show how in morality and politics Plato held an organic view that rejected the development of moral concepts in isolation. Gale supported the circular nature of morality, along the lines of the Florentine Neoplatonists in their treatment of love. For him, God, the *Summum Bonum*, was "the ultimate goal, desirable in itself and the measure of every good", was the cause of all created things and likewise "Beauty Itself", worthy of love, object of beatitude (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 430-36). Man tended naturally towards God by virtue of the love that he received from Him and which he felt for Him: "divine love inevitably seeks to establish the essence and integrity of formal blessedness" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 439). Thus, human society was based on "friendship" (*amicitia*), of which God was the guarantor. He was indeed "the origin (*princeps*), cause, and author of friendship . . . almost the only Friend". Friendship was the strength that transformed and perfected. It was the foundation of justice, which was the order, the "vital spirit" that circulated through the universe (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 634-51). Under the influence of Florentine Neoplatonism (and Pico in particular), Gale was interested in the questions of will and human liberty. In his opinion, Plato was the philosopher most likely to create an anthropology that reconciled free will and the reality of divine intervention — a will that was free in a relative and not absolute sense, while still being effectively free; God was at the same time the guarantor and the circumscriber of this freedom (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 447-52). This argument overturns the Pelagian claims that free will is absolute, infinite, and unlimited. Gale believed that it was not possible to consider freedom outside the co-ordinates of divine will and natural laws, since God required the free act and enhanced it: "The necessity that arises from the efficacious and limiting encounter with God does not destroy liberty, but augments and perfects it" (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 470-71).

Platonic thought and the tradition that it created constantly reiterated God's omnipotence, which constitutes man's free will and never abandons it, while setting out the conditions under which it must operate. Gale's Platonism is clearly concerned with subjugating free will to divine providence, thus making it appear as an antecedent to Calvinism. Gale does not attempt to hide his purpose. Platonic teleology, on both a natural and a moral plane, meant the exaltation of divine omnipotence, not in the mystic's esoteric sense, the schoolman's syllogistic sense, or the canonist's legalistic sense, but as a global plan for salvation that involved every creature in the development of love. Gale asserts: "That same love by which man is subjugated to serving God — that is, his very servitude — is his liberty, which Augustine calls *free servitude* (*Libera servitus*). For the closer a creature is

subject to his creator, that is to his own liberty, so much freer does he become; for the very love of the creator is his formal liberty" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 557).

Gale considers the opposition to this concept of divine omnipotence to include all those who made dangerous distinctions in the relationship between human liberty and the workings of God. The Jesuits were the worst offenders; their ethical concepts, which allowed so much room for freedom even in the divine act of knowledge, destroyed the harmony between the creative act, human life, and the return to God. Gale makes frequent attacks on the Jesuits in his analysis of Platonic ethics. Particularly important is his indictment of the Jesuits in relation to the moral act since he believed that its importance must never be underestimated, because it is addressed to God, on whom man so closely depends (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 494-507; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, pp. 405-6 and 410-13). Gale adopts a position midway between radical Calvinism and the moderate rationalism of the Cambridge philosophers. However, he had no intention of accepting a compromise based on a distinction between them, as this would lead to the reappearance of the spectre of decadent Scholasticism and various insidious forms of Pelagianism. In the *Philosophia generalis* he makes considerable use of the writings of St Thomas and Suárez, which he then compares with those of St Augustine and Jansen. This comparison between Scholastic and radical theories is intended to disprove all optimistic interpretations of mankind based on pure reason. In contrast, the Jesuits' view of human free will as equally inclined to good and to evil was an attempt to make man "the forger of his own fortune in divine matters". Thus it would be "for man to choose God, and not God man" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 606). Gale argues at length against this spirit of compromise (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 607-33) and analyses the slavery of mankind and the tremendous depths to which it goes, using Plato's rejection and condemnation of the world of senses and characterization of the body as a prison: "Plato quite often emphasizes (*inculcat*) this slavery and voluntary necessity of sinning" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 632).

The attack on Jesuitic rationalism (an intention that is openly declared in *The Court of the Gentiles*, Vol. iv, *Of Reformed Philosophie*, 'Preface', p. [1]) also explains his treatment of Aristotle and the Stoics. These two schools (together with Cynicism, Scepticism, and Epicureanism) are dealt with only briefly, as they are considered less noble sects (*minus nobiles Sectas*) and could be treated as an appendix to the analysis of Platonic philosophy (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 695-6) — their more significant doctrines had been taken from Socrates and Plato, and where they developed their own thought it was a distortion of these two Greek philosophers and Sacred Doctrine. Gale is clear in his rejection of Aristotle, whom he thought far less original than Plato in his development of Jewish philosophy (which he did not directly

encounter: cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, pp. 425–6). He also considers Aristotle's method responsible for rationalist deviations that have affected Christianity.

Although he accepted the importance of Aristotle's concept, taken from the Bible, of the soul's immortality (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 699–702), thus implicitly rejecting Pomponazzi's naturalistic interpretation, Gale very much doubted that Aristotle's thought could ever have been developed for Christian purposes. For example, as far as the Aristotelian concept of 'right reason' (*recta ratio*) was concerned, he felt that it could well be interpreted as "a certain subjective reason inherent in human beings", which would be a mere fiction and meaningless at that. He believed there was no possibility that an Aristotelian position on this question could be independent from Platonism. *Recta ratio* must be understood as a rule and objective order, as *lex naturae*.

So that we may conclude, that 'tis not any subjective Right Reason, or Light of Nature, which is the measure of moral good and evil; but an objective Right reason, or the Common Law of Nature, which is the same with God's Law, called Moral; because it gives Forme and measure to all moral good (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, p. 474).

The true interpretation of moral law was held by Plato; Aristotle's developments from it had ambiguous results (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 714–15; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, p. 473). Although in his metaphysical speculations, Gale noted, Aristotle adopted several Jewish doctrines, he had done so purely on the basis of rational verification and not through revelation.

He readily admitted teachings about the First Cause and its immateriality, unity, truth, goodness, and providence, because they were extremely consonant with natural reason; but he rather fastidiously rejected other teachings that were more opposed to human reason, certainly those about Ideas, or Divine Decrees, about the production of primal Matter out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), etc. (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 719).

According to Gale, Aristotelian philosophy rejected those doctrines that reason recognized as superior, because they had been revealed by God and were the principal guide to salvation. Aristotle's use of pure reason endangered Plato's universal project of a teleological and religious philosophy (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 723).

Aristotle was the unconscious founder of a tradition that had corrupted philosophy, a tradition characterized by the initial position adopted in some writings towards the free development of doctrines. It was based on a series of works that somehow managed to survive into Roman times and which kept commentators busy in both classical and medieval times. These com-

mentators seemed more interested in works that had been distorted and were perhaps not even genuinely Aristotelian than in a solid tradition based on various reliable sources and open to new developments (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 433–5). The result was a collection of arbitrary, subtle, and often inept interpretations, based on the letter and not the spirit of Aristotelian thought. Moreover, the text, from translation to translation, became more and more corrupt and in turn more and more demanding for the commentator, who faced the colossal task of clarifying the literal meaning (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 720–22; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 435–8). At this stage, Aristotle's rationalism became a pernicious naturalism. The Aristotelian tradition thus burnt itself out, and it could not have been otherwise, given the depth and the comprehensiveness of the Platonic system, against which Aristotelianism appeared as a pedantic dialectical analysis of a few of Plato's major arguments. Gale asserted that "Plato teaches, Aristotle tests (*Plato docet, Aristoteles probat*)" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 723; cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 430–31).

All post-Platonic thought presented characteristic similarities to the philosophy of Aristotle. Gale's basic thesis is that we are faced with a misinterpretation of Plato's synthesis; the Cynics emphasized the independence of morality, which was considered the principal area of philosophical research (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 725–6; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 484–5), and the Stoics drew heavily on Jewish and Platonic thought (for instance in their view of the final conflagration and of providence). They based themselves, like the Cynics, on a morality of self-sufficiency that was very far from the sacred revelation and only strengthened the Pelagian heresy (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 732–44; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 490–91, 495–6). The Sceptics distorted the methodological positions of Heraclitus, Socrates, and Plato on probability and the world perceived through the senses, by rejecting every form of knowledge and advocating the complete suspension of judgement (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 745–9; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 500–504), and lastly Democritus left Epicurus a speculative tradition that went back to the Phoenicians (Mochus) and included the corpuscular concept of the universe; but Epicurus, motivated by arrogance and vanity, associated this tradition with materialism, sensuality, hedonism, and atheism (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 750–53; *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, pp. 507–12). Gale's conclusion is that in this last phase Greek thought ended up obscuring revealed doctrines, and as a result made it extremely difficult for the scholar to distinguish between the original Jewish concepts and the Greek elaborations. Quoting from Iamblichus, Gale claims that, while the Greeks had a great capacity for assimilation, they were unable to preserve the richness

and the precise formulations of the doctrines taken from barbarian peoples (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 753-4).

This aspect of Greek genius obscured the positions adopted by the various sects and led to many errors. It was only with the resumption of the Platonic tradition outside Greece, with the Alexandrian school, that it was possible to establish a relationship with revealed doctrines, and spread them even after the age of the Church Fathers, recalling the sacred origins of classical Greek thought. But even Neoplatonism itself was unable to understand correctly the nature of these origins, obscuring the dogma of the Trinity (through Ammonius' speculations); it did not keep pure the doctrines on the soul, the relationship with God, and the World, and it fell into the error of the doctrine of daemons and the worship of the sun (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecaic Philosophie*, pp. 272-4). The true unity of the sacred doctrine could come only with Christianity, which celebrated the true meaning of Platonic thought and rejected those dangerous deviations the Greeks had introduced (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecaic Philosophie*, pp. 274-5). This thesis is found throughout *The Court of the Gentiles*, but it is most fully developed in Vols. III and IV.

1.4.4. Any comment on Gale's methodology has to take into account his attitude to ancient philosophy. He perceived the history of thought as the translation, the passing on of revealed doctrines. The presentation of the different philosophies is therefore dominated by this perception, which was completely new to the nascent historiography of philosophy. Gale does not relinquish the *apparatus criticus* of Stanley, Hornius, and Vossius; indeed, he insists in the presentation of his 'General Historie of Philosophie and Philosophers' that his task is to study "Sects, Dogmes, Modes of Life, Discipline, and Characters" (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Reformed Philosophie*, 'A Proemial Scheme of Reformed Philosophie', p. 1), that is to say every aspect of the historical development of philosophy. However, a purely biographical and doxographical scheme was not sufficient to demonstrate the pace at which this transmission occurred. He decided to reorganize the material that had been put together. The method in which the history of philosophy is discussed is what can only be called extremely doctrinal. If Stanley's treatment of Platonic thought is compared with Gale's in the *Philosophia generalis*, it becomes immediately clear how the method has been changed. Stanley intended to present Plato as the sum of his personal and doctrinal contributions without clarifying the system, and basing himself as usual on Laertius as well as on two very different works, the writing of pseudo-Alcinous and Pico's comment on Beniveni's *Canzone d'amore*; whereas Gale attempted to recreate the entire Platonic philosophy from the dialogues and other sources, following the doctrinal developments and discussing their significance.

The sequence with which he considered each philosopher was a revolutionary one, and followed the pattern: life, works, opinions, doctrines, and followers. Gale had to prove the part of the truth that entered into the philosopher's (or the people's) doctrine under discussion. This meant proving how much of the doctrine derived from Jewish thought and how much it differed, as well as the means of its "transfer from the sacred sources (*traductione a Sacris fontibus*)". He does not designate a speculative nucleus around which to arrange the various disciplines, but prefers to follow his own scheme and evaluate the influence of Jewish thought, the original contributions made by a philosopher, and any deviations. However this search for errors and useful developments is not carried out mechanically. The exposition of doctrines is accurate, more detailed in *The Court of the Gentiles* and at times more succinct in *Philosophia generalis*, but he never ignores any aspect of the philosopher examined, so he can establish the part played by Jewish doctrines without contrived arguments or breaks in the analysis.

The examination of influences is therefore fairly natural, and Gale develops his arguments skilfully. Even when they are less convincing, they do not invalidate the entire exposition. For example, he precedes his treatment of each of the more important philosophers with a review of the theses put forward in classical thought (Greek, Roman, Christian, and Jewish) and recent studies on the derivation of many of the doctrines of these philosophers from Jewish thought. In this review, he does not take a position on all the theories mentioned, but attempts to find the common ground between various critics on some fundamental points and the reliability of the Church Fathers (for Plato, cf. *The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Grecian Philosophie*, pp. 235-44). Gale is fully aware that to prove his essentially theological thesis, he must be extremely precise in his historical analysis, and therefore makes use of considerable learning and discusses the various interpretations at length. Unlike Hornius (to whose *Historia philosophica* he often refers), Gale is very careful about his historical presentation and rejects any testimonies that are doubtful or somewhat unlikely. For example, when he is discussing Joseph the son of Jacob, who brought wisdom to the Egyptians, he refers to the theory that he was the same person as Hermes Trismegistus and does not reject it, despite the results of Casaubon's historical studies. "Nevertheless, although many stories are told about Hermes, and the works published under his name seem to be spurious; still, considering the things previously mentioned and compared, I have very little doubt that the true and ancient Hermes was Joseph" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 16). In this Gale was typical of contemporary scholarship, which had rejected the authenticity of the Hermetic writings while still using Hermes as a historical figure for its own purposes, since he could be identified with Joseph. The historical fact contained in the Bible was therefore extremely important, as it reconfirmed the philosophical primacy of the

Jewish people. Thus the founder of Egyptian letters and arts was not a mythical character, but a leading exponent of Jewish thought (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, pp. 13-14, 40-41).

Another example is to be found in his treatment of Pythagoras. He abstains from attributing specific works to this philosopher and restricts himself to the assertion that "There is great controversy amongst the learned about the works of Pythagoras" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 186). All the works that are said to have been written by Pythagoras can be attributed only to his school. Thus his doctrine as a whole is the work of several thinkers (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, pp. 210-12). This is important for Gale, as it allows him to widen the decisive influence of Jewish thought and the presence of revealed doctrines into a tradition that lasted for centuries (*The Court of the Gentiles, Of Barbaric and Greceanic Philosophie*, pp. 212-14). The use of philological criticism also allowed him to eliminate the importance of traditions that could not always be reconciled with divine revelation, as had been case for the Chaldeans, who had attracted much attention during the Renaissance following the spread of the *Chaldean Oracles* by Ficino, Patrizi, and Heurnius. In a few pages, Gale dismisses the text; it consists of "spurious remarks of some half-Christians" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 143). Gale also uses these arguments to avoid attributing advanced philosophical achievements to a people who from the very beginning had distorted divine revelations received from Noah.

But the degenerate descendants of Noah quickly digressed from this purer philosophy of the Patriarchs and immersed themselves in the abyss of diabolical astrology and idolatry. For, once the Creator had been set aside, they were captivated by the contemplation of the heavenly bodies, first in admiration of them, then in adoration (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 136).

However, Gale does not carry out a philological critique simply for apologetic purposes, but connects it with historical exposition. He knows how to use biblical, patristic, and Greek sources to demonstrate the stages of revealed knowledge. There are lengthy extracts discussed with clarity and thoroughness. The argumentation is linear, and commences with a short list of the author's main theses, corroborated by a few texts. He next discusses each question with hypotheses for and against, and concludes the discussion with a few brief considerations backed up by other texts that summarize the problem under discussion. The process is thus both expository and demonstrative, and the various paragraphs are bound together with one another as so many successive demonstrations. Each chapter or section thus becomes a sequence of demonstrations that, though not always linked together among themselves, still lead to some general conclusions regarding the transmission of revealed thought.

Gale breaks with the biographical model and never quotes from Stanley's

History of Philosophy. He must certainly have been familiar with the work by the English philologist, which had been only recently published. Gale knew and used the works of Hornius and Vossius, and could not have ignored Stanley's monumental work, especially its treatment of Chaldean thought. The only possible explanation is that Gale rejected the way Stanley studied the ancient philosophers, the lack of theoretical direction and connection between historical events. Gale wished to create an original reading of the ancient philosophers and had no desire to be a mere proofreader and editor of Diogenes Laertius; consequently he reduced the biographical element to a bare minimum and used the historical and erudite elements to back up his main thesis. This led him to neglect the Ionic and Italic Schools, the Socratic sects, the Stoics, the Peripatetics, the Sceptics, and the Academy. The Eleatics, on the other hand, receive a very different treatment. Although a brief chapter of *The Court of the Gentiles* deals with them exclusively (*Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, Bk. II, ch. 10, pp. 214-18), Gale avoids the curious aspects of this sect and concentrates on the theism in the thought of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Zeno, and the atomism in the thought of Leucippus and Democritus. His attention to the speculative aspects of the sect leads to a clearer attribution of the origins of the doctrines.

Gale is concerned solely with the Greek philosophers who had a significant role to play in developing sacred doctrines. Only Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are considered at length. Plato alone takes up 500 pages of *Philosophia generalis* (pp. 190-690) and 185 of *The Court of the Gentiles*, (*Of Barbaric and Grecanic Philosophie*, Bk. III, pp. 235-420). It would be worth examining, by way of example, the way Gale organized the various aspects of Plato's thought and the spirit in which he did this. In *The Court of the Gentiles*, (ch. 2) he begins with the arguments that had been used in classical and modern times to demonstrate the dependence of Platonic thought on the Jews; (ch. 3) he discusses the philosopher's life, referring in particular to his travels and his contacts with Oriental thought, with the Egyptians, and with the Jews; and (ch. 4) he illustrates the history of the Platonic school from the Ancient Academy until Neoplatonism and the Alexandrine School. Moving on to the more general aspects of Platonic philosophy, he concentrates on Plato's method, detecting the influence of the Jewish schools, which had come down through the Pythagorean school and the teachings of Socrates (ch. 5); he deals with the various parts into which Plato's philosophy could be divided, and is particularly attentive to the influences he was subjected to (ch. 6), and with the concept of philosophy and philosophical activity that Plato argued for and put into practice (ch. 7). He finishes the review of the methodological aspects with the discussion of logic (ch. 8); physics, with various sections on the Universe, the macrocosm and its parts (mineral, vegetable, and animal), and the microcosm (i.e. man) with its problems of intellect, free will, and grace (ch. 9); and morality and

metaphysics (ch. 10). The order in which he deals with these subjects demonstrates how the biographical and bibliographical elements are soft-pedalled, while ample attention is paid to the Platonic philosophy and its preceding methodology, as well as to the various parts of Plato's system — its prospects and results. In the *Philosophia generalis*, the scheme is very similar to that of *The Court of the Gentiles*, but it puts more emphasis on the second aspect, the perspectives for a development of the Platonic tradition. On the other hand, *The Court of the Gentiles* shows a clear interest in the question of its Jewish and Oriental origins. In any case, Gale seems to have wished to consider Platonic thought in itself and not only Plato as the figurehead.

The abandonment of the classical model leads Gale to treat the texts in three ways: direct quotation of the philosopher's texts with a brief comment, quotation of biblical texts with a comparison between revealed and Greek doctrines, and quotation from the usual historical sources with a preference for the Church Fathers. These three forms of quotation are used to trace the history of the sacred doctrine within the philosophical system, with biblical doctrines attributed to an author on the basis of patristic accounts and analogy and not only on the basis of his own texts. Many examples can be taken from his analysis of Plato's philosophy. Concerning the universal flood, Gale claimed, "That Plato mentions (*meminisse*) the Flood, after the fashion of the Mosaic description, is established by the common agreement of learned men" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 263). He quotes Eusebius, who referred to a passage from the *Timaeus*, and then goes on to quote a few sentences from this dialogue in which the Flood is discussed, but without making any direct comment on them. This he leaves until later, when he comments indirectly through his considerations of modern authors like Jean de Serres (Serranus), who wrote on history and theology and translated Plato in 1578, and Thomas Lydyat, the author of *De origine fontium* (London, 1605), both of whom wrote about the Flood in the Mosaic narration. At the beginning of Bk. iii, ch. 2, § 7, Gale announces that he wishes to discuss plants "according to the thought of Moses and Plato (*ex mente Mosis et Platonis*)", and immediately commences to examine the biblical text (Genesis 1: 11–12). He comes to Plato and his doctrine only after having discussed the views of Philo Judaeus, Ficino, Stobaeus, and Cardano on the animation of plants, and then just to quote from the spurious text *Theages* (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 304–7).

In the treatment of morality in the Platonic system, Plato's texts move even further into the background and are replaced by texts from medieval, Renaissance, and contemporary philosophers and theologians. Quotations from the Bible and from the Church Fathers become rare. Gale, at this stage, is most interested in placing Plato in the context of the burning theological questions of the day. Calvin, Jansen, Gibieuf, and Suárez dominate his arguments, followed by Augustine, the only Church Father quoted

with any frequency on this matter, and the Schoolmen Thomas, Duns Scotus, and Bradwardine. The style of the discussion then becomes rather scholastic. Gale shows himself to be at ease with controversy: citations from both contemporary and scholastic theologians are increasingly interspersed with arguments of his own and with trenchant criticisms of the positions he is examining. The work becomes less historical, developing into a kind of systematic treatise written from a Platonic perspective. Yet Gale never loses sight of the agreement between Plato and modern theology, and even after the main part of the theological discussion he continually refers to Plato and the Greek philosophers. For instance, after analysing the reconciliation of free will and divine necessity, he goes on to examine Plato's views in the *Symposium* on the necessity of Love: "It seems to me, however, that no one among the pagans has more brilliantly reconciled the effective interaction of God with human freedom" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 474).

So, at this point in these two nominally historical works, Gale achieves a blend of systematic exposition and historiographical method. Rather than preceding or following the historical presentation, the systematic presentation is embedded within it, at the very moment when the key figure of the entire history — Plato — becomes the focus of study. Gale puts forward a method of writing the history of philosophy in which the truly philosophical account, engaged in polemic and Reformation apologetics, is placed in direct contact with the historical narrative. Indeed, the underlying assumption of Gale's historical works, which appears at first sight to be a historical one regarding the process of transmission of Jewish thought to the Greeks, is really theoretical. The work only appears to be lacking in *a priori* assumptions: the path of ancient thought is assumed to have manifested its direction in its point of arrival, that is, Plato, where the shape of the "true" and "eternal" philosophy is shown in full light. Instead of illustrating true philosophy at the point when it was first revealed to Adam or at the revelation of the 'first philosophy' to Moses, Gale prefers to complete his full description of it at the most prominent point of its development. With this systematic exposition of Plato's thought and everything connected with it, including both Jewish thought and later Christian thought, Gale aims to show the reader that the question of philosophical and religious revelation is not only relevant to remote and ancient times, but embraces every historical period.

Human thought, according to Gale, experiences revelation in continually new and different ways. Oriental and Greek thought developed the corpus of doctrines that were brought to fruition in the works of Plato. The Platonic system, reflecting the individual contribution of the founder himself, was the starting point for a tradition that spread and enriched revealed doctrines, but also distorted and adulterated them. The analytical method that Gale adopts has the twin objective of studying the method on which the Platonic synthesis is based, and pointing out all the problems that it created for Christian

thought by involving it in philosophical debates that have lasted centuries. Vol. III of *The Court of the Gentiles* simply emphasizes in polemical form this second aspect of Gale's method, the problems that Platonic thought presents to Christian theology. The theoretical part of *Philosophia generalis* and Vol. IV of *The Court of the Gentiles* resolve these problems and outline the direction of philosophical reform that emerges from the systematic analysis of Plato's thought.

Gale's method manages to link the system of reformed philosophy to a wealth of historical material, thanks to a skilful interpretation of the texts and the information they contain. He examines Mosaic, Oriental, Pythagorean, Platonic, and Greek non-Platonic philosophies in the light of a system that is a dynamic reference point open to further developments and does not follow a pre-established system based on reformed philosophy. Divine revelation to the Jews opened the way to speculations that were complex and wide-ranging. To explain this, Gale referred, on the one hand, to the doctrines revealed by the Bible according to Calvinistic views, and on the other to Platonism, a tradition that had arrived in England after centuries of fertile achievements. By asserting the fundamental agreement between Reformation Christianity and Platonism as a corpus of doctrines, Gale has created a yardstick by which to judge philosophical events. The doctrines are not, however, compared with the final development (the Platonic system or evangelical-Neoplatonic synthesis) but with its origins. In other words, the doctrines are interpreted as stages in the development of the truths contained in the first revelation and subject to endless twists and turns. These stages are the doctrinal positions expressed in the texts, convictions, and theories that spread through the ancient world. Gale is forced to interpret them in order to make them fit perfectly into the development of divine revelation and comprehensible in the light of successive events.

Thus, in the case of Plato, various passages are referred back to the system and taken out of their context; they are used to illustrate the different doctrines that make up the development of divine revelation, which Reformation philosophy needs as its base. Gale's treatment of moral liberty linked to divine omnipotence makes use of Platonic texts that have no clear connection with the theological themes under discussion. For example, the line from the *Republic* (IX, 592) that talks of a model (*exemplar*) for the state, which exists in the heavens, is the basis for the affirmation that "God is the first measure of all things and the most perfect model" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 528), and a long sentence from the *Laws* (IV, 716) that discusses the requirement to follow and honour God is the foundation of the assertion that "To follow God is the perfection of divine resemblance and freedom" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 529). Gale uses some passages from Plato to prove that original sin (*Vitiositas naturae*) is "the first actual cause of sin after the fall". He quotes from the *Politics* (274) a passage on man's decadence after the

mythical age of Chronos and a passage from the *Laws* (v, 731) in which Plato states that "the greatest of all evils is innate to the soul of many men" (*Philosophia generalis*, p. 570). These sentences are used to justify a theological conception totally foreign to the Platonic viewpoint.

Gale justifies these procedures in the following terms: Plato took over two philosophical forms from the Jews, the dialectical and the symbolic. He hid profound truths behind symbols, since they could not be explained in terms of pure reason, through dialectics and disputation. All his work followed the procedure of the Jewish thinkers. It became indispensable, in Gale's opinion, to follow the development of Plato's thought by interpreting the doctrines formulated in a symbolic mode into explicit forms within a theological context (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 686-9). In the history of thought, many doctrines need to be interpreted — any other position would subvert the profound significance of Jewish speculation and the whole concept of philosophy as a revelation that develops through both reason and imagery. In concluding his analysis of Platonic thought, Gale condemns Origen and other mystical philosophers who adhered to the erroneous parts of Plato's doctrine, and he exhorts his readers to accept only those parts in which Plato managed to glimpse the divine mysteries, those sparks of truth in the darkness of ignorance that then clouded the pagan world (*Philosophia generalis*, pp. 689-90).

For Gale, the fact that truth is constantly developing means that the texts themselves explain that development. It is not a matter of simple comparison to assess whether a text expresses the truth, in what way, and to what extent; it is a question of assessing what truth the text has been able to develop in relation to the preceding revealed truths and the truths developed later. The truth contained in a text is not an end in itself; and this is where Gale breaks with the 'polyhistoric' mentality. He applied to philosophical historiography a view of global development that was the fruit of the open theology, typical of Christian Platonism in the Reformation.

1.5 Gale was unsuccessful in his attempt to summarize the spread of the sacred doctrine in antiquity and thus prevent the use of pagan thought to back up atheistic arguments. Neither the four volumes of *The Court of the Gentiles* nor the *Philosophia generalis* were to have very much influence. It was Cudworth's *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, published a year later, that was to fulfil the role that Gale had intended for *The Court of the Gentiles*. Cudworth's interpretation relied on a greater number of sources, and above all was not restricted by the confines of Gale's refutation of atheism. He had no rigid thesis on the derivation of all classical doctrines from Jewish thought, and he recognized the light of truth in pagan thought that derived from an original natural revelation. His ideas on the consensus of peoples and philosophers on the fundamental truths of God, the soul, and

mankind were therefore more acceptable. Degérando's assessment, in his brief history of historiography of philosophy published in the early nineteenth century, demonstrates the relative importance of the works: Cudworth's work is described as an important collection of "the richest documents on the philosophical opinions of the ancients", while Gale's work is merely "a compilation" in which it is possible to discern "neither selection nor connection (*ni choix ni liaison*) . . . a sort of dictionary rather than a picture (*tableau*)" (p. 141).

So the *summa* of Platonism was to be Cudworth's book, while *The Court of the Gentiles* with its narrow didactic and muddled approach was gradually to fall into oblivion. After the notice of the first two volumes in *Philosophical Transactions* (vi, n. 74 (August 1671), pp. 2231-2), no further prominent writings concerned themselves with Gale's work. Morhof, who valued both *The Court of the Gentiles* and the *Philosophia generalis* for the breadth of the material used, made no mention of Gale's arguments and general theses. Indeed, he even referred to an earlier Latin edition of *The Court of the Gentiles*, and confused the works of Theophilus Gale and Thomas Gale (*Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. 1, ch. 1, § 8, p. 5; *Polyhistor practicus*, Bk. v, § 2, p. 525). Fabricius, on the other hand, quoted from the *Philosophia generalis* in his *Bibliotheca Graeca* (Vol. XIII, p. 640), referring to it as *Theologia generalis*.

There has also been a tendency to ignore the historiographical aspects of *The Court of the Gentiles* and the *Philosophia generalis*, which were the most significant contribution that Gale made to European culture. One reason for this is almost certainly the fact that the two historical parts are together with theoretical works, and were not always recognized as histories of philosophy. Heumann, who was always keen to discover any works on the history of philosophy that preceded the *Acta philosophorum*, was the first to review the historical part of the *Philosophia generalis*, and he perceived it as a fully-fledged history of philosophy. Before this, as has been already been pointed out, only Morhof had assessed the two works by Gale in the context of *historia philosophica*. Heumann's overall judgement of Gale's historical work was balanced, and recognized its serious contribution to the history of ancient thought, both in its scholarship and in its synthesis of the various philosophies (Vol. III, pp. 793-802).

Up till 1715-20, it appears that there were no reviews of Gale's writings that could introduce them to the republic of letters, and they had no influence on later histories of philosophy, even those concerned with Jewish thought and how it spread. The short work by Daniel Colbergius, *Sapientia veterum hebraeorum per universum terrarum orbem dispersa* (Gryphswalde, 1694), which dealt with the very theme of the spread of Jewish thought in the classical world, ignored both *The Court of the Gentiles* and the *Philosophia generalis*. Buddeus' work was often concerned with the matters of historical research linked to theological speculation and Protestantism that had also

concerned Gale (such as the Eclectic method), but he never cites Gale, preferring to quote from More, Christian cabbalistic literature, and German and Dutch scholars of Jewish thought.

Gale was not a useful historiographical model for the German eclectic school. Those who happened upon his works (such as the author, who may have been Gundling, of the review of philosophical histories in the *Neue bibliothec*, II (1711), p. 386) noticed only the bizarre nature of his thesis on the transmission of the sacred philosophy. Gale's style, which combined erudition with theological speculation, did not find favour in scholarly circles that viewed the text as the stable reference point and did not understand the philosophical nature of the history of philosophy in the Platonic sense. Gale's methodology differed from More's, and was not concerned with an explanation of esoteric doctrines based on the Jewish knowledge of mystery. *The Court of the Gentiles* is not concerned with cabbalistic and pseudo-cabbalistic literature. It insists that the sacred doctrines were spread outside the Cabbala and partially condemns the cabbalistic tradition by warning of the dangers of mystical theology. These elements meant that the work was of little interest to the writers with cabbalistic sympathies who were to be found in the early eighteenth century (Buddeus is the prime example of this attitude).

Gale's historical writings were therefore appreciated by very few scholars. It is worth recalling the exception of Jaques Basnage, who in his *Histoire des Juifs* (The Hague, 1716), Vol. III, pp. 421-37, praised the enormous preparation that went into *The Court of the Gentiles* and adopted its arguments on the derivation of Egyptian wisdom from Joseph and Moses. Brucker's thorough assessment of Gale emphasized the importance of the historical theories that connected the Jews with the foundation of *historia philosophica*. He considered the attempts to trace all the doctrines of Greek thought back to the Jews misplaced, and judged Stanley's *History of Philosophy* to be superior to the *Philosophia generalis* in its preparation and critical detachment (Brucker, Vol. I, 'Dissertatio praeliminaris', p. 36). He also felt that the account that was given of Platonic thought was very unsatisfactory because of the arbitrary confusion between Platonic texts and Neoplatonic thought (Vol. I, pp. 613-41; Vol. VI, p. 436; cf. *Kurze Fragen*, Vol. I, pp. 582-96). However, Brucker approved of Gale's historiographical approach based on Eclecticism, designed to dispute Cartesian and materialistic tendencies. His evaluation was that Gale's view of the speculative contributions of ancient thought in harmony with the sacred revelation was that this represented a serious historical exercise that did not adopt a muddled or complacent approach to mystical doctrines. Brucker approved of these intentions, but regretted that Gale was unable to provide a proper cross-reference between the history of ancient thought and the texts, because he was so involved in his own interpretation (Vol. IV, § I, pp. 434-7). Brucker critically observed

that in Gale's works there was the appearance of a hermeneutics that often demonstrated an inattention to the texts and to critically reliable accounts because it was more concerned with a theological overview than with historical truth. Later Buonafede was to come to similar conclusions: he complained that Gale had obscured the value and importance of his historical writings "with presumed traditions and with Platonic servitude, which were the delights of his school" (*Della istoria*, Vol. 1, Preface, p. xxx).

1.6. On his life, character and works:

A. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (London, 1692), Vol. II, pp. 451, 750, 778; L. Moreri, s.v. 'G., T.', in *Le grand dictionnaire historique* (Paris, 1745), Vol. IV, p. 482; Jöcher, II, col. 830; L. G. Michaud, *Biographie universelle* (Paris, 1816), Vol. XVI, pp. 285-6; F. Hoefer, *Nouvelle biographie générale*, (Paris, 1857), Vol. XIX, cols. 217-18; Franck, pp. 567-8; A. Gordon, s.v. 'G., T.', in DNB, VII, pp. 817-18; J. W. A. Smith, *The Birth of Modern Education: The Contribution of Dissenting Academies, 1660-1800* (London, 1954), pp. 41-6; H. Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 13-15.

On his reception in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

Review of T. G., *The Court of the Gentiles*, Vols. I-II (Oxford, 1669-71), in PhT, VI, no. 74 (August 1671), pp. 2231-2; R. E., *A Defence and Continuation of the Discourse Concerning the Period of Human Life: Being a Reply of a Late Answer entituled 'A Letter to a Gentleman, etc.', to which is Added an Appendix, wherein Several Objections urged in Private are Considered, and Mr. Gale's Severe but Groundless Charge is Examined* (London, 1678); 'Nachricht von den Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', NB, II (1711), pp. 385-6; J. Basnage, *Histoire des Juifs depuis Jésus-Christ jusqu'à présent* (The Hague, 1716), Vol. III, part I, pp. 421-37; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 793-802; Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 36, 631-41; Vol. IV, § 1, pp. 434-7; Brucker, *Kurze Fragen* (Ulm, 1731), Vol. I, pp. 582-96; Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Bk. I, ch. I, § 8, p. 5; *Polyhistor practicus*, Bk. V, § 2, pp. 524-5; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. I, Preface, p. xxx; Buonafede, *Della restaurazione*, Vol. I, p. 85; Degérando, pp. 140-41.

On the historiography of philosophy:

De Remusat, Vol. II, pp. 117-23; Sailor, *Moses and Atomism*, pp. 9-10; Schmitt, 'Prisca Theologia', pp. 228-30; Braun, pp. 73-4; S. Masi, 'Eclettismo e storia della filosofia in Johann Franz Budde', *Memorie della Accademia delle scienze di Torino, II: Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Ser. V, Vol. I (1976-7), pp. 191-2.

2. THOMAS BURNET (c.1635-1715) *Archaeologia philosophica*

2.1. Thomas Burnet (Burnetius) was born in Croft (Yorkshire) around 1635. From 1651 he studied at Clare Hall, Cambridge, where he became a student of Cudworth in 1654 and was also strongly influenced by More. In 1658 he assumed the title of Master of the Charterhouse at Christ College and later

worked in the service of Lord Orrery, through whose assistance, as well as that of the Duke of Ormonde, he became Rector of Charterhouse in 1685. During his travels in France, Italy, the Low Countries, and Germany he made contacts with scholars and academies concerning the questions of physics and cosmology that so interested him. In 1688 he was appointed Chaplain-in-Ordinary to King William III, but he was stripped of the position in 1692 when the publication of his *Archaeologia philosophica* caused the Archbishop of Canterbury to raise serious doubts about his orthodoxy. He withdrew to Charterhouse, where he died on 27 September 1715. This author should not be confused with the other Thomas Burnet (1632–1715) who wrote about medicine and corresponded with Leibniz (this error was committed, for instance, by Jöcher, Vol. 1, col. 1505).

2.2. Burnet did not write extensively. He concentrated nearly all his efforts on the development of astronomical and geological theories concerning the Earth and the universal flood. However he did also write theological works, some of which were burnt by his heirs, while others were published posthumously. These included *De fide et officiis christianorum* and *De statu mortuorum et resurgentium*, first published on what was practically a private basis in 1722 and 1720 respectively. They were then republished in London in 1727 and 1723. Both works went through several editions and were translated into English (1727–8) and French (Amsterdam, 1729; Rotterdam, 1731). His philosophical work, *Remarks upon Locke's Essay*, was published anonymously in three parts between 1679 and 1699. This gave rise to a polemic over Locke's writings, in which Catherine Cockburn also took part.

Burnet's reputation rests upon the *Telluris theoris sacra: orbis nostri originem et mutationes generales, quas iam subiit aut olim subituris est, complectens* (London: G. Kettilby, 1681; 2 books), which was translated into English and printed by the same publisher in 1684 as *The Theory of the Earth: containing an account of the original of the earth and of all the general changes which it hath already undergone, or is to undergo, till the consummation of all things*. The Latin original was republished with the addition of a further two books in 1689; the English translation appeared shortly afterwards in London (1690–91), with an appendix containing *The Review of the theory of the Earth*. Both the Latin and English versions went through many editions. In 1694 and 1699 the Latin original was published in Amsterdam together with the *Archaeologia philosophica*. There was a third Latin edition in 1702. The third English edition was published in 1697, the fourth in 1719, the fifth in 1722, the sixth in 1727 and the seventh in 1759. A modern edition based on the London edition of 1690–91 was published in 1965 with an introduction by B. Willey.

In 1692 G. Kettilby published in London the first edition of *Archaeologia philosophica, sive doctrina antiqua de rerum originibus*. This was followed in the same year by an English translation of a part of Bk. 11 (*Archaeologia philosophica; Or, the ancient doctrine concerning the originals of things*). Many other editions of the *Archaeologia* were to follow. As has been already pointed out, it was published together with the *Telluris theoria sacra* in 1694 and 1699. In 1729 a complete English translation was produced, with notes by Thomas Foxton. Further Latin editions appeared in 1728 and 1733.

2.3. Thomas Burnet's interest in the history of philosophy arose from the defence of his well-known theories on the Earth, the universal flood, the

changes that have occurred in our planet, and the final conflagration. In the 1681 edition of the *Telluris theoria sacra*, he started to put forward (with the approval of the Royal Society on 27 April) some theories, which over the years he was to develop into an extensive system — the most interesting theory concerned the change in the Earth's axis and the structure of the Earth's crust.

In Bk. 1, he argued that before the universal flood the Earth's axis had been perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic and the Earth had been an oval-shaped planet with all the elements in harmony. The divine will and natural developments transformed the chaos of matter into a planet with a nucleus of fire, covered by a great mass of water, the surface of which became a smooth film created out of impurities from the liquid. The atmosphere that encircled the Earth cooled its crust and made it hard and compact (*The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (London, 1965), pp. 53–64). This perfect state of the Earth before the Flood allowed man to live long and in peace (*The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, pp. 133–4). However, man's wickedness provoked a terrible punishment, and cracks appeared in the Earth's crust and steam escaped and turned to water, which flooded down from the poles to the equator, throwing the Earth's surface into disorder, creating mountains, caves, and the valleys in which the seas were formed (*The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, pp. 64–89). The Flood covered the entire planet and, besides radically changing its appearance, moved the Earth's axis so that it was inclined to the plane of the ecliptic. This in turn led to dramatic climatic changes and the cycle of different seasons (*The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, pp. 90–118).

Burnet's theory on the Flood was primarily intended to explain the biblical Flood in strictly scientific terms, and to show that God punished humanity through natural causes. Divine will and the chain of natural causes developed together.

Now it should be noted that although we shall explain the breaking up of the old world and the reasons for the Flood according to the order of natural causes, since in that way they can be understood more clearly and distinctly, this is not to say that the Flood had been ordained as a punishment for the human race, or that providence had been bypassed by its particular movements; but rather divine wisdom shines from it especially because it adapts and adjusts the natural world to the moral in such a way that by the nature of the latter and by the free movements of the former (*imo in eo elucet maxime sapientia divina, quod mundum naturalem morali ita coaptet et attemperet, ut huius ingenio, illius amborum libertatis momentis*), the times and vicissitudes of both at once concur and complement each other (*Telluris theoria sacra* (Amsterdam, 1699), p. 34).

Secondly, it was to explain the formation of the mountains and the seas as well as to study the events that had affected the Earth's crust and lastly to

initiate a new method of research into the origins of the universe, the Earth and living beings, mankind's destiny, and the final events in the history of the world. His method was based on the interpretation of the Scriptures and their reconciliation with science.

The first two books of the *Telluris theoria sacra* dealt respectively with the universal flood ('De diluvio et dissolutione Terrae') and the primordial nature of the Earth ('De tellure primigenia et de paradiso'); these he followed with two further books that attempted to complete the reconciliation between religion and scientific research. The third book was on the universal conflagration ('De conflagratione mundi') and the fourth on the prophesied new world and heavens after the conflagration ('De novis coelis et nova terra, ac de beato seculo, sive de mundo renovato et rerum omnium consummatione'). As he envisioned it, the current state of the Earth was destined to change at the end of time, following a new catastrophe that would return the planet to its primordial state and introduce Christ's kingdom — the Flood was not an isolated event. The cataclysm created by water that broke the Earth's crust up into mountains and abysses was to be followed centuries later by another cataclysm by fire. This conflagration corresponded on a scientific level to the new heavens and new earths mentioned in the Scriptures. It was therefore possible to understand the history of the Earth in the light of the Bible without straining the original meaning, and without blurring the distinctions between scientific fact and the history of God's interventions. Burnet did not literally accept the biblical accounts of the Creation, early man, and his destiny, nor did he deny everything in the name of an abstract rationalism; rather he attempted carefully to interpret the truth that these accounts revealed.

The most important truth to emerge, for Burnet, was the agreement between the Copernican view of the universe and God's actions and their underlying meaning. Declaring Moses' account to be implausible, and arguing that it should not be interpreted literally, he explained that the Bible showed that the only way to explain how the Flood and the history of the Earth were in agreement with God's omnipotent will was to admit the mobility of the planet and its presence amongst an infinite number of others that filled the universe. Burnet summarized the theses of the *Telluris theoria sacra* as follows:

Finally, it is objected, if it is permissible to abandon the letter of Moses in the first chapters of Genesis, why not the rest as well? Where does one stop: by what limit, what law? Let not the historical and literal sense be lost everywhere through lightness of mind (*Ne, levitate scilicet ingenii, pereat ubique sensus historicus et literalis*)! I respond that it is a common and very well-known law of interpreters, *that no-one may depart from the letter without necessity (nulli recedendum a litera sine necessitate)*. With this as a guide, we shall be

safe. And if I have violated this law anywhere, I should like to have any such slips pointed out. . . . It seems to me not ill said, *that Philosophy is the interpreter of Scripture in matters of nature* (*philosophiam esse scripturae interpretem in rebus naturalibus*). But I understand philosophy not to be dry and barren, an idle figment of the brain, but something that responds to the phenomena of nature with repeated experiments and firm reasons (*Archaeologia philosophica* (Amsterdam, 1699), p. 525).

The conclusion drawn in the *Telluris theoria sacra* (and in the *Archaeologia philosophica*) was that the sacred text needed to be interpreted in spiritual and allegorical terms, when it was not possible to adopt the literal sense. Theological interpretation and scientific investigation demonstrated that the Earth passed from one state to another and that it would eventually return to its primordial state. Both the scientist and the believer could agree on this, although with different embellishments according to the cosmological or the religious and spiritual context in which this interpretation was developed.

Burnet expressed interest in all the theories that, from antiquity onwards, demonstrated at least some understanding of the major questions concerning the origins, the evolution, and the destiny of the Earth (*Telluris theoria sacra*, pp. 196–205). He thus came up with the idea of a work specifically on the ancient views of the cosmos, the Flood, and the final conflagration (*Archaeologia philosophica*, p. 337). The study of ancient interpretations of the universe and their written documentation could help to confirm his hypothesis on the state of perfection existing on the Earth before the Flood. This would have backed up the thesis on the parallel agreement between science and the Scriptures.

Moreover, he believed that historical analysis of the accounts of the world's origins could make it easier to organize the doctrinal material that claimed to go back to the most ancient times. Burnet felt it necessary to check the historical accuracy of ancient philosophies about the theories of the changing state of the world and the final conflagration he claimed as positions belonging to Moses. A great number of writings and pamphlets were published in the wake of the *Telluris theoria sacra*, either supporting or rejecting Burnet's Mosaic theories. The most important of these were: E. Warren, *Geologia, or a discourse concerning the Earth before the Deluge: Wherein the form and properties ascribed to it, in a book intituled 'The theory of the Earth' are excepted against* (London, 1690) — the work most harshly hostile; J. Ray, *The wisdom of God manifested in the works of the creation* (London, 1691); J. Woodward, *An essay toward a natural history of the Earth, and terrestrial bodies, especially minerals . . . with an account of the Universal Deluge; and of the effects that it had upon the Earth* (London, 1695); W. Whiston, *A new theory of the Earth from its Original to the consummation of all things* (London, 1698); J. Keill, *An examination of dr. Burnet's Theory of the*

Earth (Oxford, 1698) — the work most openly favourable).¹ Burnet sought the most ample documentation from ancient philosophy, examining historical accounts of the cosmos to eliminate all spurious doctrines that had been mistakenly attributed to ancient times and thus clarify genuine cosmological theories. Those concepts about the Earth and its origins that did not prove to be derived from the wisdom of ancient peoples were looked upon with suspicion and treated with caution. Writing the history of conceptions “of the origins of things (*de rerum originibus*)” involved checking all their credentials of antiquity. The first book of the *Archaeologia philosophica* became not so much “a commentary on or appendix to the *Telluris theoria*” as a work in its own right, a critical history of the most ancient doctrines.

It was based on an analysis of both Greek and barbarian wisdom and philosophy. Burnet specifically referred to it as a historical-philosophical work. He was very familiar with the methodology of the history of philosophy through the wide-ranging examples given in the works of Stanley, Hornius, Vossius, and Gale. Referring to Bacon’s views on the subject, he stated that the most useful form of literary history was the history of philosophy because it was not primarily concerned with biographical events, but analysed the contribution of doctrines to the development of thought.

Now in the history of literature there can be nothing more excellent or profitable than to explain the various opinions of philosophers and what they professed in various sciences . . . As for other matters which frequently make up a literary history, such as the lives of philosophers, the circumstances of their births and funerals, their praises, travels, together with their good and bad actions and particulars of the like nature, they do indeed fill up and adorn the subject, but are of lesser moment when we endeavour to search out the seeds and progress of human knowledge, and the government and Oeconomy of divine providence in this affair (*Archaeologia philosophica*; *Or, the ancient doctrine concerning the originals of things* (London, 1692), p. v).

This position becomes even more interesting if one takes into consideration the methods followed by historians of philosophy in the mid seventeenth century, but it cannot be considered as preparing the way for the more complex positions of Heumann, Brucker, or especially Tiedemann (as Braun argues, p. 75). It is certainly true that Burnet follows Bacon’s approach, considering the presentation of philosophical progress to be the task of *historia litteraria*. However, we do not share the view that he believed in the evolution and progress of thought, writing a history rather than a *historia*, as claimed by Paolo Rossi (‘Sulle origini dell’idea di progresso’, in *Immagini della scienza*, p. 56; ‘La “capricciosa rivoluzione” di Tommaso Burnet’, in

¹ For a review of all these writings and the positions adopted in them, see Paolo Rossi, *I segni del tempo: Storia della terra e storia delle nazioni da Hooke a Vico* (Milan, 1979), esp. pp. 89–100.

Scritti in onore di A. Corsano, pp. 658–9). He intended only to study the history of letters in order to gather together the ancient doctrines and evaluate their particular contributions. The method involved examining texts, fragments, and historical accounts. At the end of Bk. 1 of the *Archaeologia* he briefly reviewed, very much in the manner of polyhistory, and explicitly referring to Jonsius, the historians of ancient thought who dealt with the problem *de rerum originibus*. He distinguished genuine historians of philosophy from those who wrote about recondite doctrines (such as Porphyry and Numenius) and from the ancient polyhistorians who left accounts useful to the historical study of philosophy (*Archaeologia*, pp. 444–5).

Burnet did not develop the concept of progress in history independently; his frame of reference was that of seventeenth-century scholarship. His only attempt to outline the progress of human knowledge is more of a general observation than a genuinely theoretical reference point. He wrote that the philosophy of ancients was mainly concerned with physics: it had addressed the origins, and so had invented cosmogonies; then it had studied the heavenly bodies from astronomical and astrological viewpoints, thus creating cosmologies; finally it had begun to investigate the Earth's elements — thus initiating true natural philosophy as the investigation into the order and quality of natural phenomena. For Burnet the importance of these stages lay in the fact that they demonstrated how human thought tended to start from the major problems of reality (God, the universe, the Creation) and gradually work down towards more restricted and concrete problems concerning natural phenomena. "In a word, philosophy takes its rise from the greatest things and proceeds to the least, and wisdom shall be consummated, if God so pleases, at the end of the world, when the race of letters, things, and seasons shall be run" (*Archaeologia philosophica; Or, the ancient doctrine*, p. vii). The history of thought was characterized by the way man's attention had proceeded from the cosmos to natural phenomena, from the general to the particular and complex. The study of theories on the beginning confirmed this tendency of human thought to confront the great questions before concerning itself with the world of experience. In its youth mankind developed its great theories, and in its maturity it developed the experimental sciences (*Archaeologia*, pp. 331–2).

Burnet did not comment on these assertions, nor did he use them as the basis of his historical periodization. He simply remarked on the success of modern civilization in the scientific investigation of the elements of things. However, his own interests were directed to those more general problems of natural philosophy that had not yet been adequately resolved, in spite of the attention given them from the very earliest periods. He did not feel that the origin of the world, the catastrophe, the return to the primordial state should be neglected in favour of experimental study of natural philosophy or on the basis of a mechanical explanation. Although he started as a Cartesian favour-

ing a natural explanation of the cosmos, Burnet did not accept a mechanical explanation based on mathematics — in this he reflected the influence of his Neoplatonist teachers. Events about the cosmos and the Earth could be interpreted not as an ordered geometrical mechanism, but as the product of forces that developed through matter. The workings of nature could not be demonstrated through geometry, and because of this the ancient cosmological philosophies needed to be revived. Burnet wanted to find in the most ancient doctrines the overall consideration of the problems of natural philosophy outside the rigid analysis of the Cartesians and experimentalists.

Like his fellow Neoplatonists, Burnet was fascinated by the vastness of the problems that the ancients approached and the breadth of material that these doctrines embraced. They devised theories and invented solutions to questions concerning the Earth, heavenly bodies, and the cosmos, which had to be admired for their daring and synthetic nature (*Archaeologia*, pp. 447–8). He wrote that the ancient peoples expressed their concepts both through the natural desire to understand the beginning and through divine revelation:

it appears that in every generation men have had not only some notices of the supreme being, but also concerning the natural world, the origin and the conclusion of things, and the intermediate vicissitudes (which three are all that can be imagined), and these notices we speak of were not only true, but in some measure divine (*Archaeologia philosophica*; *Or, the ancient doctrine*, p. vi).

In other words, the ancient peoples were in direct contact with the divine revelation, on both a natural and a supernatural level. The importance of their accounts was that they reflected more closely the origins of the Earth, and therefore all these developments should not be lost or forgotten but recovered by means of the available philological methods.

The task of reconstructing ancient literature could at times seem a desperate one, but Burnet believed that it had to be attempted with the same methods used in archaeology. He observed that

as we learn something of the nature of Grecian architecture from the broken columns and decayed marbles, so from some fragment of ancient philosophy we form judgment concerning the other parts of the work, according to the rules of symmetry, and judge of the whole fabrick (*Archaeologia philosophica*; *Or, the ancient doctrine*, p. vii).

By using known doctrines as reference points, the historian of philosophy was able to reconstruct through analogy the obscure and incomplete doctrines of which only fragments remained. In truth, Burnet played upon the word 'archaeology' and also gave it the meaning of 'study of the ruins of the Earth in its primordial state', referring back to his arguments in the first two books of the *Telluris theoria sacra*. The reconstruction of all the physical images from ancient times (the surface of the Earth) were to be seen as archaeology, 'the study of the remains of the great catastrophe'; the images

recreated through doctrines and theories were archaeology, 'the study of ancient doctrines restored to new awareness'.

In this process of reconstruction, he intended to use the history of philosophy as a critical tool. Burnet's expressed intentions were not the same as the declarations on critical method made by Stanley, Hornius, and Vossius. Here we are confronted with a new use of historical-philological criticism that works together with the careful study of philosophical works and historical accounts — the criticism affects the doctrines themselves. Burnet's general premise, stated at the end of the first chapter of the first book of *Archaeologia*, was that the study of ancient wisdom and philosophy was to refer continually to the rational basis of the doctrines. This reference to *ratio* was not something abstract, but concerned all the events in which the peoples were involved. Burnet made a comparison with long sea voyages, in which the stars used for bearings changed with the hemisphere.

Now as they who undertake long voyages have sometimes the light of the sun to direct their course, sometimes the light of the moon, and at other times that of the stars, as opportunities and weather permit, so when the remotest times are to be enquired into, we must not everywhere expect the advantage of the same light, nor can we follow the same guides, but according to different affairs and times, the force of light and the authority of witness will be various and unequal. However, after having duly weighed all that may be of moment in the cause, let us incline to that side which produces the most clear and probable reasons, though they may not be strictly conclusive (*Archaeologia philosophica . . . ; or an Inquiry into the doctrine of the philosophers of all nations concerning the original of the world* (London, 1736), p. 4).

Every rational basis to the doctrines was evaluated with reference to the general development of theories and civilizations.

Burnet wanted to get to the genuine formulations of the doctrines, to check whether they were in fact ancient and to evaluate how scientific they were in relation to the period and the society in which they were first developed. Not every doctrine could be accepted as genuine purely on the basis of classical confirmation. Moreover, several doctrines, although authentic, existed only in summarized form or attempted to understand profound truths through mythical and fanciful expressions. Burnet considered the *fabulosum philosophandi genus* as a particular method for confronting problems concerning the beginning. First wise men hid the truth from many peoples because they were not ready to receive it, then the truth was replaced through various fictional devices by fables, and finally scholars then had to extract the true doctrines from these fables (*Archaeologia*, pp. 332-3, 421-2).

Burnet's method differed from that of Gale, Cudworth, and More, who attempted to maintain the sapiential value of the ancient doctrines, resorting

to allegorical interpretations in order to overcome some of the difficulties. He used the ancient *sapientiae* to demonstrate the relationship between established truths and the fanciful forms by which they were hidden from the populace. The Cambridge Platonists, who had instilled him with the interest in Oriental and barbarian wisdom, had accepted these mythical and fabulous expressions as genuine philosophy, requiring interpretation to extract the recondite meaning. Burnet, on the other hand, held that they were a conscious travesty of a philosophically pure content, which the ancient wise men had clearly understood and deliberately concealed. For Burnet, the difference between the two methods was fundamental: on the one hand, it was accepted that obscure language and unbridled fantasy could be interpreted as profound philosophical messages, while on the other, a philosophical concept was compared with the fanciful form that represented it, partly obscured it, partly clarified it and made it acceptable. When discussing the first example of 'concealment' in Egyptian wisdom, Burnet explains that in ancient, barbarian, and Greek thought, "the enchanted philosophy (*philosophia larvata*)" consisted of transposing a doctrine based on reason into a mythological language, but this did not mean that the two methods of expression and investigation should be confused.

Whence it will be proper to suppose that every ancient race that has its own mythology formerly had its own pure philosophy, around which, as if a kernel, a shell of fable had been wrapped. For mythology, or any allegorical doctrine, requires craft and study (*Studii enim et artis opus est Mythologia, aut quaevis doctrina allegorica*); it is not the first impulse of ingenuity, but the second or third, since things had already been discovered, and had to be hidden or elaborated (*Archaeologia*, p. 393).

According to Burnet, the moment of pure thought in ancient wisdom was at the beginning. It received its doctrines and then it covered them in fanciful forms, creating the myths. With the passing of time, the meaning of the original philosophy was forgotten, and thus the myths lost their accepted meanings or even fell into a kind of symbolic delirium; the meaning might also survive with some difficulty, and then the new conscious elaborations of the myths would permit philosophers to rediscover the genuine rational meaning. The stories of Genesis (*Hexaemeron*) were a clear example of deliberate concealment of the true doctrine by a thinker who had not lost contact with the beginning. Moses, who fully understood the correct theory of the cosmos, felt that it was not possible to reveal it fully to the ignorant and sensuous Jews, and therefore resorted to the story of the Creation in six days and the sin of disobedience (*Archaeologia*, pp. 510-11). In the dedicatory letter *ad virum clarissimum A. B.*, he openly argued that Moses' writings were a typical example of an attempt to conceal the true doctrine, "a somewhat obscure (*aliquatenus involutam*) parable or allegory" (*Archaeologia*, p. 329). He

even saw, in the part of Orpheus' thought that had survived, an important example of the concealment of truth for didactic purposes and explanation through imagery. "Those who are uneducated and accustomed to the senses alone, like men recently led out of the shadows or prison, are unable to bear the clear light of truth; but they enjoy looking at it through fables, as though through a cloud" (*Archaeologia*, p. 408). Equally, he believed that when Thales and Anaxagoras founded Greek rational philosophy, they concealed the true doctrine of the universe, because of popular prejudices:

The ancient crowd could not allow the physical causes of celestial things, and the crowd of the learned as well as the unlearned is still not able to allow the immobility (*quies*) of the sun and the motion of the earth. In every age, you see, *the truth begets hatred*, and it is a troublesome thing to philosophize freely (*incommoda res est, libere philosophari*). Not without reason, then, did the ancient wise men (*prisci sapientes*) keep *the arcane Doctrine* to themselves, not only because it was above the heads of the crowd, but also because it was against their sympathy and inclination (*contra affectum geniumque*). Hence it may even be guessed that the history of ancient philosophy, not only through the injuries of time, but also from the fear and judgement (*metu et consilio*) of the writers, is mutilated in its greater part — and that the more excellent, that is the arcane, and the less commonplace (*Archaeologia*, p. 422).

Burnet thus ended up by associating Mosaic wisdom with other forms of wisdom that concealed the truth. In very ancient times, the authors of many versions of the Creation were primarily concerned with ethics rather than physics. Throughout the *Archaeologia* Burnet repeated the position adopted in the *Telluris theoria sacra* that Moses had not been the first to conceal the true doctrine (the Egyptians had preceded him), nor had he been the first philosopher and the source of all philosophical doctrines, as Gale had claimed (*Telluris theoria sacra*, pp. 137–42). He believed the spread of revealed wisdom had occurred before Moses. This meant that the doctrines revealed to Moses already existed and were known to other peoples before him — Egyptian, Chaldean, and Arab thinkers, like Moses, had speculated about the Creation. This meant that there had been general agreement between the ancient peoples about the Creation, original sin, and the Flood. There had been one single source for these doctrines, and he must have been Noah, the only man to live through the Flood. Burnet viewed the history of philosophy as starting with Noah, who then passed on to his sons and descendants the view of the world that he developed before and after the Flood, in a simple and rational manner without embellishments or recourse to concealment. Burnet defined Noah as "a great man, a worshipper of the true divinity, and acquainted with both worlds (*virum magnum, veri numinis cultorem, et utriusque mundi scientem*)", "the common heir" of humanity

before the Flood, "an inhabitant of both worlds". Noah possessed total wisdom, a genuine view of the Creation, and the most systematic understanding of revealed and natural knowledge (*Archaeologia*, pp. 449–51). As his works were no longer extant, the only way to reconstruct his doctrine was to refer to any traces that might have been left in history through the written accounts of the pagan world (*Archaeologia*, p. 450). This was the proof that information contained in the Scriptures was not enough on its own and had to be integrated with the works and fragments left by other peoples.

Burnet believed that both Scripture and non-Jewish works had equal historical value. Rational as well as historical and philological criticism needed to be equally concerned with the Bible and the other ancient sapiential texts in order to verify the two sources of understanding ancient thought. Elements of Moses' story were to be found in many of the very earliest speculative expressions. It was therefore possible to summarize the wisdom of the peoples that came after Noah and organize it around the common positions on the Earth's primordial state, the catastrophe, and the possible return to that original state. The importance of the history of philosophy was consequently considerably enhanced — the study of ancient doctrines became essential to the understanding of the biblical account. Burnet did not want to belittle the Scriptures, which were central to the Christian faith, but simply wished to remove them from their isolation from science and philosophy, and to interpret them through the same methods used on any other text or doctrine of the same period (*Archaeologia*, pp. 518–19).

Burnet's position was innovative not only for the field of the history of philosophy, but also in the field of the philosophy of history. His treatment of the history of the Jews and the development of their doctrines and concepts was the same as that used in the study of other peoples. In the *Scienza nuova* Vico excluded the Jews from his history of mankind because they were an elected people guided by God, and restricted his historical and philosophical analysis to the gentiles (*Scienza Nuova seconda*, in Vico, *Opere*, ed. F. Nicolini, pp. 404, 445, 474–5). Several years earlier, Burnet had adopted the much more radical position that the study of the ancient world should be carried out on an entirely historical basis, with no exception, and that the sacred texts should be put into a historical context. However Burnet was cautious when he outlined his philosophy of history and laid down general interpretative principles; he analysed only the doctrines of ancient peoples in any depth and ignored other aspects of their civilizations. Bk. 1 of the *Archaeologia* was a history of philosophy containing important insights into an overall perception of history. He divided human history into three parts: the obscure, before the Flood; the fabulous, between the Flood and the institution of the Olympics in Greece; and the historical, after the Olympics (*Archaeologia*, pp. 337–8) — this was not simply a chronological division in imitation of the ancient conception.

Burnet used these historical divisions to lengthen the history of mankind before Christ, which had normally been restricted to a 6,000-year period. He did not believe it was possible to place such a limit on the history of the universe from the time of its creation until the coming of Christ — the obscure and fabulous eras could well have been very much longer, he thought.

In short, as to the epoch of creation, untouched and unexplored by the ancients, not only did I not dare to define it within fixed limits, but also, since I affirmed that an eternal creature could not be conceived, it was immediately added that the limit of six thousand years was a very brief epoch. I have never dared to prescribe the divine creation. This, along with many other things, I leave quite willingly among the secret things of God (*Archaeologia*, p. 328).

Burnet also divided human history into three parts because he was convinced that the revelation to Noah, the heir to the original revelation, did not create *ipso facto* a profound knowledge amongst the different peoples, and that humanity only gradually came to understand life and the world. Reason, known to all the peoples, was used in different ways, and not all the doctrines developed were able to draw on or to preserve wide-ranging sets of problems (*Archaeologia*, p. 447). Burnet believed that the first two ages, the obscure and the fabulous, lacked reason and were mainly affected by the senses and fantasy; he was in no way a precursor to Vico's doctrines. His position was simple: in those first two ages, the level of intellectual and moral evolution amongst the peoples was not very advanced and therefore the philosophical theory made only slow progress. However these peoples retained and developed concepts passed down from the primordial revelation — the task of the historian was to uncover those concepts.

When compared with Vico, Burnet appears more advanced in some respects and more backward in others. The study of all ancient wisdom together, including the sacred Scriptures, was certainly a considerable advance towards free religious criticism, and compares favourably with the more cautious *Scienza nuova* (we should not forget the works of Simon, which came out at the same time as the *Telluris theoria sacra* and the *Archaeologia*). Burnet's perception of these *sapientiae* as partially the product of a rational and almost scientific mentality meant that his historical and anthropological outlook was closely linked with that of the Cambridge Platonists and all those who, basing themselves on the Church Fathers, believed that ancient schools of wisdom were sophisticated expressions of reason. In spite of any changes that he may have made to these attitudes, so dear to Cudworth and More, Burnet was very far from Vico's theses. He had no doubt about the philosophical nature of ancient thought. Ancient authors (their thought was not only developed collectively, but also by writers working alone who were perhaps no longer known) drew a distinction between true

doctrine and its popular or vernacular versions which required a considerably advanced use of reason.

Burnet often made use of a theory of reason *sui generis* amongst the ancient peoples and spoke of the particular characteristics of their philosophy. The minds of their thinkers were more accustomed to reflecting on the entire range of philosophical problems. However, they were not able to use the same rational and dialectical instruments adopted by contemporary thinkers and even classical Greek philosophers (*Archaeologia*, pp. 447–8). The philosophical practice of ancient peoples consisted of affirmation and aphorism; these were designed to maintain, consolidate, and even conceal received doctrines, but not to create new ones. Burnet defined this as *philosophia traditiva*. Far from being irrelevant to the primitive way of life, this tradition was the only means to organize knowledge at that time (*Archaeologia*, p. 448). The movement of ancient philosophy was therefore neither progressive nor regressive (as Braun would have it, p. 76, speaking of “slow but inevitable degradation” of the original philosophical truth). For Burnet, it was simply the gradual spread through various channels of the initial perception that was if anything enriched by the concepts which received its partial truths.

History of philosophy must take every historical account seriously and include all kinds of philosophical activity in order to achieve a complete overview of the various paths of human reason, and not operate simply out of a desire to assimilate wisdom into philosophy or to subordinate philosophy to theology. The learned ecclesiastic Thomas Burnet did not have Gale’s reforming plan in mind — his only purpose was the systematic study of human and natural history in ancient times. He was therefore obliged to investigate the most disparate forms of ancient wisdom, and not to lump them together. The philosophical nature of ancient thought was very different from contemporary thought, but it could not be excluded from a *historia philosophica*, for one was the premiss for the other. The investigation of more general questions about the universe had to precede the study of more complex ones. Thus reason had to serve its apprenticeship on the revealed doctrines — the cosmogonies that were handed down and the mythical forms invented for the general populace. Burnet did see progress in thought and the development of methodology, but the results of science and the various branches of philosophy did not detract from interest in the earlier forms of reason — even from its infancy. Indeed, knowledge of those very earliest speculations was essential if man’s destiny and his true dignity and the purpose of nature’s entire development in the context of man’s origins were to be understood. The return to speculations on the origins, advocated in the *Telluris theoria sacra*, consisted here in the reassessment of ancient philosophizing in comparison with the scientific philosophy of Descartes or Hobbes.

2.4. *Archaeologia philosophica*

2.4.1. We have used chiefly the edition of *Archaeologia philosophica sive doctrina antiqua de rerum originibus* published in Amsterdam in 1699 by J. Wolters, which is the easiest to find in European libraries. (In some cases we have relied on the English translations of 1692 or 1729.) The *Archaeologia* is on pp. 323–544 of the 1699 edition, while pp. 1–321 contain the *Telluris theoria sacra*. The work, dedicated to William III of Orange, King of England, is preceded by an ‘Authoris epistola ad virum clarissimum A. B.’, which is 4 pages long and first appeared in the 1692 edition. Burnet had written a second and much longer dedication to the unidentified ‘A. B.’, but it was not published until 1720 in the appendix to *De statu mortuorum*. It was then printed, together with the first letter, in 1723 and 1727 (we have consulted the edition published in Rotterdam by J. Hofhout in 1729, where it is to be found on pp. 367–405). The two letters also appeared in the 1728 and 1733 editions of the *Archaeologia*. After the ‘Epistola’, there is a 4-page ‘Praefatio ad lectorem’.

The *Archaeologia* is divided into 2 Books, with 14 chapters in the first and 10 in the second. Each chapter is summarized in its title and has an average length of about 20 pages. Information on the texts quoted is to be found in footnotes. There is one ‘Index rerum’ common to the *Archaeologia* and the *Telluris theoria sacra* (pp. 549–58). The *Archaeologia* has a table of contents at the beginning (pp. 335–6). The real discussion of “the ancient doctrines on the origin of things (*doctrinae antiquae de rerum originibus*)” exists only in the first book (pp. 337–451). The chapters are as follows: ch. 1, ‘Ratio et propositum huius operis: Quatenus Telluris Theoriam respiciat, Quatenus Historiam Philosophicam’; ch. 2, ‘Conspectus Philosophiae Antiquae per varias Terrarum Gentes: Primum, de Scytis, Celtis, et Aethiopibus’; ch. 3, ‘Indorum Orientalium perlustratio: Speciatim de Serum et veterum Brachmanum literis et Philosophia’; ch. 4, ‘De Assyriis et Chaldaeis’; ch. 5, ‘De Persis, eorumque Magis’; ch. 6, ‘De Arabum et Phoenicum historia literaria’; ch. 7, ‘De Hebraeis, eorumque Cabala’; ch. 8, ‘De Aegyptiis et multifaria eorum literatura’; ch. 9, ‘De Philosophia Graecanica et primum de Orphica’; ch. 10, ‘De philosophis Graecis post Orpheum: et primo de Ionicis’; ch. 11, ‘De Pythagora et secta Pythagorica’; ch. 12, ‘De secta eleatica et de Stoicis’; ch. 13, ‘De Platonis, Aristotelis, Epicureis’; ch. 14, ‘De origine Philosophiae Barbaricae’. As an appendix to the *Archaeologia*, ‘De Brachmanis hodiernis apud Indos’ (pp. 541–4) is a tract that takes up the arguments considered in Bk. 1, ch. 3.

2.4.2. Since Noah and his descendants did not pass on the primary wisdom in a uniform fashion, Burnet analyses its presence amongst the ancient barbarian peoples, according to Ephorus’ categories stated by Strabo. The Scythians were to the North, the Celts to the West, the Ethiopians to the South, and the Indians to the East — all the other peoples descended from one of these four and inherited part of the post-diluvian wisdom.

The Scythians did not leave any traces of their philosophy amongst the peoples of the North, and only the names of their philosophers survived: Anacharsis, Abaris, and Zamolxis (*Archaeologia*, p. 340). Although they had Druids with a vast sapiential tradition, the Celts, Britons, Germans, and Iberians did not pass on any complete and systematic doctrines (*Archaeologia*,

pp. 340–41). Amongst the Italic peoples, the Etruscans distinguished themselves by their strong belief in the Great Year (*Archaeologia*, pp. 341–2). The philosophy of the Gymnosophists flourished amongst the Ethiopians, and this produced doctrines useful for a civilized and ordered society (*Archaeologia*, pp. 342–3). The peoples of the East developed their own fully-fledged philosophies. Above all, the Chinese had their own cosmogony and their own doctrine of the Flood. Even though the Indian Brahmins left only fragments of their doctrines (in which they spoke of the total renewal of the world and the immortality of the soul), they started a philosophical tradition that survived into modern times (*Archaeologia*, pp. 344–7). It was clear from the accounts of missionaries and travellers that the Chinese, the Indians, the Siamese, and the peoples of Coromandel and Malabar had maintained aspects of the ancient *sapientiae*, including concepts of the Earth and its creation that went back to Noah (*Archaeologia*, pp. 541–4).

The Oriental peoples were the group with the richest and most fertile philosophical tradition. Burnet then moves the discussion from the Indians and Chinese to the Persians, Jews, Arabs, Phoenicians, and Egyptians. The Jews lived in relative isolation from other peoples, but it can be proven that they received the basics of natural philosophy from the Egyptians, who were the most ancient people and the first to develop wisdom through Hermes — Phoenician and Greek thinkers borrowed heavily from this tradition. Apart from these peoples, about whose wisdom we know at least something, Burnet also mentioned those peoples remembered only in name and whose doctrines cannot be restored: the Atlantics of Lybia, the Corybantes of Phrygia, the Cabiri of Samothrace, the sons of Helios and the Telchines of Rhodes, and the Hyperboreans *in extremitate Terrae* (*Archaeologia*, p. 446).

The wisdom of the Greeks originated entirely from the Orient. Initially this was through the direct influence of the Egyptians and Jews on Orpheus, but later there was an intense exchange of doctrinal ideas, which led the Greeks to develop philosophical theories independently. Greek scholars and historians tended to overlook the Oriental origins of their philosophy, mathematics, and geometry, and claimed them to be purely Greek in origin. Burnet felt this absurd, as every Greek doctrine could be traced to an Oriental source (*Archaeologia*, p. 400). The Oriental origin of Greek thought was an undeniable fact, attested by Greek culture itself, as well as the Jews, the Church Fathers, and the Neoplatonists. Pythagoras and Plato, the two greatest Greek thinkers, both considered it indispensable to refer continuously to the wisdom of the Egyptian people (*Archaeologia*, pp. 401–3). The Oriental civilizations flourished centuries before the emergence of the Greek nations. “Hence, considering everything, letters as well as literature (*tam Literis, quam literatura*), the notion that the barbarian and older philosophy is also the parent of the Greek very much corresponds to ancient history and to the relationships of things and of times”. Burnet believed that the division

of Greek philosophy into sects, far from demonstrating originality, contributed to the dispersion and distortion of Oriental thought. The Greeks, who believed their dissenting philosophical schools to be original, did not realize that they were losing touch with the original theories, whose unity they were totally unable to recognize.

Those few and famous principles about the rise and fall of the world, and about the order of changing nature, that were for the wise men of old the image of all Natural Philosophy (*Physiologia*), the Greek sectarians utterly neglected. And out of the minutiae of things and thoughts they built a kind of philosophy that was more suitable for nourishing disputations than for investigating the truth (*Archaeologia*, p. 404).

Burnet divides the history of Greek thought into the period before the sects and the period after the sects. In this second phase, "the ancient philosophy faded out, and what succeeded it in the Greek schools was more artificial than solid (*exolevit philosophia antiqua; et quae ei successit in scholis Graecorum magis artificiosa fuit, quam solida*)" (*Archaeologia*, p. 404). In the first period, the poet-philosophers flourished; men such as Linus, Orpheus, Musaeus, and Hesiod, followed by Homer, Eumolpus, Amphion, and Melesander. Then came the genuine philosophers divided into the initial sects: the Ionic, the Italic, and the Eleatic. The successive sects marked the transition to the sectarian period — the Platonic and Stoic sects had only a limited understanding of the Creation and the conflagration, and after them the Peripatetic and Epicurean sects lost all interest in physical and cosmological synthesis, and concentrated on particular questions of natural philosophy, ceasing all reference to the ancient wisdom. These two sects introduced a period of decline, which Burnet does not discuss at length because he perceived little progress in philosophy or natural investigation.

2.4.3. Burnet does not feel that it is possible to re-establish the means by which Noah's philosophy was handed down, because the appearance of various civilizations had not been accompanied by a greater understanding of the doctrines about the Earth and the cosmos. Successive civilizations and the relationships between them had nothing to do with the development of doctrines on the Creation within each civilization. These doctrines spread widely and it could be said that they reached every people, each of whom then deepened their understanding of certain aspects or parts of these doctrines, and on occasions communicated their discoveries to others. Burnet can see no purpose in retracing the complex and unpredictable routes by which these doctrines were passed down. In the appendix to the *Archaeologia*, he gives the example of the Brahmins (i.e. Oriental thinkers: Indians, Chinese, Siamese, and other Far Eastern peoples) who were the only ones in modern times to preserve the ancient doctrines of Noah through a line of

descent that had involved many peoples and races. The Siamese, he thought, had also maintained very precisely the doctrines of ancient wisdom, even if their level of civilization did not appear capable of such an achievement. "Indeed it is a wonder that a semi-barbarous race has retained these teachings since the times of Noah; for this tradition could have come from nowhere else, and could have had its beginnings only in Noah and the antediluvian wise men" (*Archaeologia*, p. 543). Every people had to be considered on its own and compared with other peoples only in the case of single philosophical questions.

Burnet does not believe that the first great empire after the Flood, the Assyrian, was the beginning of the spread of wisdom. The Chaldeans' astronomical speculations had not survived (*Archaeologia*, pp. 348-9), and the *Chaldean Oracles*, considered to be the highest expression of Assyrian and Babylonian thought, are simply "a hodge-podge that for the most part follows Platonic theories, only more polished (*eruditiores*), like the Gnostics, or those who love to talk about unknown things with inflated and contrived verbiage". Chaldean wisdom, although very ancient, could not in the form in which we know it be considered the source of cosmological speculation. The few genuine fragments that have survived are in a sorry state, and the theological and metaphysical doctrines contained in the *Chaldean Oracles* were of a bizarre complexity, if indeed there was the slightest proof of their authenticity (*Archaeologia*, p. 349). The Persian Magi made a much richer and more carefully worked-out contribution, but it was impossible to know whether they received their doctrines directly or indirectly from the Chaldeans. Indeed, Zoroaster's cultural background and works could not be linked with Chaldean thought. They therefore had to be analysed separately, and it might even be that there had been a Chaldean or Bactrian thinker similar to Zoroaster, who was later confused with him (*Archaeologia*, p. 352). The Persians' philosophy and religion, which were centred upon the divinity of the heavenly bodies (especially the sun), the elements, and the Earth, constituted a cosmogony worthy of attention. Here too, the wretched state of the fragments attributed to Zoroaster and the considerable gaps in classical accounts did not allow us to reconstruct with any certainty their system of doctrines on nature (*Archaeologia*, pp. 352-5).

Burnet believed that the philosophy of the Arab thinker Job, much earlier than Moses, was one of the most ancient links in the transmission of Noah's wisdom. Arab thought, however, was not the original source, it was simply more ancient than the Chaldean philosophy. The Bible testified to Job's advanced moral philosophy and to his serene perception of a single God and natural religion. The Arabs had a very individual approach, as could be seen from the wisdom of the Queen of Sheba and the New Testament Magi — examples of a philosophical tradition based on the worship of one God, and in contrast to the idolatry of the Sabaeans (or Zabians). Both traditions had

clearly been in contact with Noah's doctrines. In fact, Job and his lineage, as well as the Sabaeans, "appropriate and lay claim to a strong relationship with Noah, and they still boast in their genealogies that the origin of their race derived from him" (*Archaeologia*, p. 357). Arab thought kept alive those doctrines on the Creation that it was able to understand, but lost the rest. But this attention to philosophical knowledge bore fruit, centuries after Christ's death, with the advent of Mohammed and the Arab conquests in the East and the Mediterranean basin. After achieving political and military power, the Arabs rediscovered philosophy and dedicated themselves to the assimilation of Greek thought (*Archaeologia*, pp. 358-9).

Arab thought did not appear to have lived up to the promise of its founder, Job. The doctrine on the eternity of the world was followed, according to the remaining fragments, by the doctrine of the mortality of the soul, and everything was overwhelmed by unintelligent allegories (*Archaeologia*, p. 359). After Mohammed, Arab philosophy repudiated its fanciful speculations, turned decisively towards Aristotelianism and Greek science, and then rigidly adopted the syllogistic method (*Archaeologia*, p. 358). The Phoenicians, on the other hand, influenced Greek thought on several occasions, suggesting important doctrines in the realm of natural philosophy and mathematics to such thinkers as Pherecydes, Pythagoras, Thales, and Zeno, even though the Phoenicians did not have a thinker of the stature of Job. Burnet believes that they did not invent scientific research through hypotheses or the atomistic theory, but that some doctrines developed by the Greeks had been falsely attributed to the Phoenicians (*Archaeologia*, p. 360). The fragments of Sanchuniathon's thought collected by Eusebius testify that their ideas went back to the beginning — that they believed that the Earth originated from chaos and took on a perfect oval shape. Gale believed that if Sanchuniathon's thought had survived into classical times, "there would have been little or no controversy about Phoenician teaching or Oriental wisdom" (*Archaeologia*, p. 361). As he saw it, Phoenician thought very cleverly synthesized the doctrines that it had received, but it had in turn been distorted through the interpretation of classical authors.

The difficult history of the Jews did not contribute to the defusion of doctrines that had been developed independently. While they had acquired very advanced ideas and kept alive the essential core of the doctrines on the Creation, their wisdom came not only from divine revelation, but it also assimilated most of Egyptian natural philosophy and mathematics. Their reference point had been Noah's wisdom, but they failed to preserve it accurately and had to reassimilate it during their enslavement in Egypt. The arrival of Moses suddenly brought Jewish thought up to the level of consciousness of the first doctrines and the original revelation — a situation not matched by any other people. Burnet agrees that this was due to divine revelation, but as he wanted to explain the phenomenon in natural terms, he

also argues that the Jews' natural disposition for prophecy and the contemplation of the sacred mysteries had been instrumental as well. While the Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Chaldeans had excelled in mathematics and astronomy, the Jews excelled in the study of the Creation and the worship of God. They attempted to return to Adam's wisdom about God and his works, and they developed an esoteric doctrine, the Cabbala, that intended to hand down the wisdom of the first man. Moses was heir to this doctrine, which had been lost. Burnet had no doubt that Moses was responsible for the most wide-ranging cosmological and theological synthesis carried out by the Jews. However, he had not been the author of the Cabbalistic doctrines, which appeared much later and were given such currency by Christian humanism during the Renaissance. These later Cabbalistic doctrines were merely developments of some suggestions that had little to do with Moses' doctrines (*Archaeologia*, pp. 362-3).

Jewish philosophy was based entirely on Moses, who in turn based himself on Noah's *sapientia* and other *sapientiae* that had been very close to it. Burnet holds that the ancient Cabbala was irredeemably lost and that it was impossible to reconstruct the Cabbalistic doctrine from the Scriptures with the doubtful methods of interpretation used by the modern Cabbalists. To make his point, Burnet involves himself in a long digression on the Cabbalistic doctrines and methods, which practically constitutes a treatise on esoteric philosophies. He starts by rejecting the part of the Cabbala defined as literal, numerical, or grammatical, which looks for new meanings in words through complicated arrangements of letters and numbers. He also rejected the magical elements consisting of formulas, invocations, and symbols (*Archaeologia*, p. 363). He then moves on to discuss the speculative Cabbala, the nominal Cabbala, which is also based on the mystical use of letters, numbers, and names, and argues that the pointless and punctilious study involved detracts from the solemnity of the argument concerning divine names, and is therefore irreligious (*Archaeologia*, pp. 363-4). In dealing with the 'real' Cabbala, he goes into some detail about the doctrine of the ten *sefiroth*, in order to demonstrate the absolute arbitrariness of the choice of names and their order. These 'emanations' could be indiscriminate categories, hypostases, ideas, or numbers. None of these concepts were valid or acceptable, even if the *sefiroth* were examined one by one (*Archaeologia*, pp. 364-8). Lastly, he discusses the doctrine of the Four Worlds, showing how it swings between the concept of the unknowable One interpreted as the invisible world and the concept of the other worlds in which the visible and the invisible are mixed. This made it impossible to carry out a precise philosophical investigation based on clear distinctions (*Archaeologia*, pp. 368-9).

Burnet's summary of Cabbalistic thought attempts to disprove the antiquity and credibility of the Cabbalistic tradition that evolved from

Alexandrine Neoplatonism through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. It had undergone a progressive corruption of the doctrinal heritage that had been barely intact at the time of Moses.

Whatever truth and solidity the Jewish Cabbala had, was for many reasons gradually diminished and corrupted. But the Hebrew teachers, in order to keep among themselves the name of the ancient Cabbala and the glory of the mystical science, which had been utterly destroyed, were restoring it by their own imaginary inventions. Moreover, with more and more fictions having been added with the passing of time by new commentators, finally the whole thing fell into confusion (*Archaeologia*, p. 373).

According to Burnet, the ancient Cabbala had been lost forever, but it could be surmised, from the fame it enjoyed and the many attempts to revive it, that it dealt with *Rerum Originatione et Gradationibus*, the derivation of things from the first Being and the levels of this derivation. It was therefore an emanationist rather than a creationist doctrine, close to the positions of the Pythagoreans and Platonists, although the lack of information means that the degree of similarity cannot be ascertained (*Archaeologia*, pp. 375–6).

The very earliest Jewish thought did not have the concept of creation or annihilation, and could not conceive of a beginning coming from nothing — only Christian theology could create the concept of the creation of corporeal and spiritual realities *ex nihilo*. As the ancient Cabbala lacked this vision, it understood the beginning of the world as a derivation from God and the final conflagration as a return to God (*Archaeologia*, pp. 374–5). Burnet does not try to reconcile these doctrines with those of Moses, but he is very interested in establishing a common ground between the ancient Cabbalistic wisdom and Moses on the beginning and other theories. The emanationist concept could have been, according to this premise, the base of Noah's doctrine — the source of all other doctrines — but Burnet does not want to take this point too far. The earliest perceptions that reported the original reality were, according to him, aware of the act of divine Creation and viewed the primitive chaos as a created reality. This interpretation, which runs through the whole of the *Archaeologia*, can be explained as an attempt by Burnet to avoid the accusation, made against him after the publication of the *Telluris theoria sacra*, that he believed himself in the emanationist theory and the eternity of the world (as is made clear in the first 'Epistola ad virum clariss. A. B.', *Archaeologia*, pp. 327–8).

The Egyptian civilization represented, for Burnet, an extremely important moment in the history of thought. It was the cradle of natural science, where they first practised geometry, astronomy, medicine, and music — although their method had been empirical and lacked the speculative commitment that the Greeks were later to give these subjects (*Archaeologia*, pp. 378–81). They developed profound and complex doctrines on the beginning of the

world and in the field of natural philosophy, thus demonstrating their successful assimilation of Noah's doctrines. Egyptian cosmology imagined that all things originated from chaos, that the primordial form of the Earth was an egg, and that consisted of the elements of fire and water. They also believed that all things would be renewed at the end of time (*Archaeologia*, pp. 382-3). According to tradition, it was Hermes Trismegistus who systemized these doctrines — all that was known about him was that he came before Moses and that the Egyptians considered him a god called Thoth. The works that have been handed down under his name were unquestionably spurious, as has been shown by Casaubon; however, it was certain that he had written a great deal since his name had spread throughout antiquity (*Archaeologia*, pp. 382-3). Burnet is not interested in clarifying Hermes' biographical details — as in the case of Zoroaster, it is not important to him how many persons went under this name, but only the doctrine professed. What was important was the history of the corpus of writing that contained that doctrine, and the expositions made of it — because of these it might then be possible to understand changes that the original thought might have undergone (*Archaeologia*, pp. 392-3).

The whole of antiquity testified to the existence of Hermes, and Burnet held that there could be no doubt that he was the author of the doctrines attributed to him since they were constantly linked with his name (*Archaeologia*, pp. 383-93). The principal sources for Hermes' doctrine were Manetho and Philo of Biblos (there is a complete list of sources in *Archaeologia*, pp. 398-9). Thus it was possible to be reasonably certain that Hermes' doctrine, which had been initially expressed in a simple, clear, and accessible manner, was gradually hidden under layers of symbolism and fantasy. The history of Egyptian thought had been marked by this gradual process, by which simple doctrines were gradually covered over with artificial forms, and the exposition of speculative philosophy was increasingly by "symbols, riddles, allegories, mythologies, and hieroglyphic images (*symbola, aenigmata, allegorias, mythologias, et imagines hieroglyphicas*)" (*Archaeologia*, p. 393). Hermetic thought was the most important example of the primary philosophy, and because it was only slowly submerged in allegorical and mythical, it avoided serious distortions exercising a decisive influence over a long period. For this reason and through the study of how it survived for so long it was possible to reconstruct the major themes of Hermes' thought, even though the original texts had been lost as more direct historical accounts.

The Egyptians handed down hermetic doctrines through their priests, who inscribed them in their books and on columns. Burnet considers this work of preservation and further development to be very important. The distinction between the sacred and vulgar genres allowed the elaboration of doctrines on the beginning and the world, free from the interference of other concepts and interests. Compared with the wisdom of other Oriental

peoples, the wisdom of the Egyptians was more consistent, since it handed down the most ancient and more profound concepts. This tradition became very useful to the Greeks, who drew upon the doctrines explained to them by Egyptian priests when they travelled to that country, following the initiatives of Pythagoras and Plato (*Archaeologia*, pp. 386–8). Yet the modern scholar was not able to interpret the hieroglyphics, and this meant it was not yet possible to understand the entire body of knowledge. It was clear, however, that as time passed the Egyptians lapsed into idolatrous rituals and abandoned themselves to superstition. Burnet is very perplexed by this contrast between a jealously preserved and extremely advanced doctrine and a religious practice centred on the worship of the stars, animals, and inanimate bodies, but he tried to overcome the problem by arguing that Catholic superstitions such as the worship of saints and the adoration of the Host do not detract from the purity of Christian doctrine. A religion or a philosophy may be corrupted for various historical reasons, but this does not take away from its true value (*Archaeologia*, pp. 394–6).

Burnet exhorts scholars not to waste their time either interpreting hieroglyphics through arguable methods or studying Egyptian religious practices, with all their baggage of superstition. He believed that the best way to understand Egyptian thought was to study its disciples, that is to say the Greek philosophers and theologians. The vitality with which the Egyptian religion spread went far beyond religious idolatry and astrological deviations — Egyptian religious practice did not prevent the philosophers from introducing the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and later the Byzantines to the most complete comprehension of the universe, the Earth, and man. The Christian and Neoplatonic school in Alexandria was able to make good use of this tradition. Only with the Arab invasion and the burning of the Alexandrian library, did the influence of Egyptian wisdom come to an end, as did the knowledge of the works deriving from ancient Hermetic thought (*Archaeologia*, pp. 396–8).

Burnet, like Gale, believes that Greek philosophy derived from Oriental thought, but he considers its primary influence to be the Egyptians and not the Jews. He also believes that the Phoenicians, Chaldeans, and Ethiopians (in astronomy) had considerable influence (*Archaeologia*, pp. 399–401). These barbarians developed important doctrines and were quite knowledgeable about such disciplines as mathematics, geometry, and astronomy. However, their most important theoretical commitment had been to the development and preservation of theological and philosophical doctrines. The Greeks adopted the doctrines of both groups. While they applied a more rigorous method to geometry and mathematics, thus making a considerable advance on the Oriental tradition, they lagged behind in philosophy and physics, often losing sight of the essential meaning of doctrines developed in the East. Burnet writes:

And now we must deal with the disciplines of natural philosophy, which the heathen used to add and mix with their Theology. And in these matters, we shall be harsher against the Greeks than before, since they received not only the beginnings of philosophical matters from other nations, but also the choicest dogmas and most splendid knowledge; which they later let fall to oblivion, for the most part when they were divided into sects, and by attempting new methods that were inept and fruitless (*novas tentando methodos ineptas et infrugiferas*), they rendered philosophy useless to the human race (*philosophiam humano genere inutilem reddiderunt*). So that, if I judge aright, it may truly be said about both disciplines that the Greeks perfected the Mathematics of the barbarians and destroyed their Philosophy (*Graecos perfecisse Barbarorum Mathematicam, Philosophiam perdidisse*) (*Archaeologia*, p. 401).

Burnet sees the Greek thinkers as directing science toward a study of problems in isolation, while showing little interest in the Creation. He also holds them responsible for the dissipation of the Oriental philosophical heritage through their division into opposing sects and their extreme individualism. Like Hornius, he takes up the Patristic thesis that the division of Greek thought into sects led to the partial distortion of the true ancient wisdom as handed down by Noah and Hermes.

Again in agreement with Hornius but in contrast with Gale, Burnet argues that the Greek peoples, in the initial heroic period of their civilization, adopted many doctrines from the East, which they both understood and further developed, but split into schools in historical times, thus losing the unity of thought and inhibiting the correct understanding of the Creation. Hence he divided the history of Greek thought into three stages: the mythical stage, the philosophical stage, and the sectarian stage. In the first stage, the Greeks developed their overall grand natural and cosmological myth, very close to Mosaic and Egyptian wisdom. This develops a real vitality. Orpheus, who comes later than Moses, is the first to behave like an Oriental sage; he was philosopher, legislator, and theologian all in one. Like Moses, he adapted his profound knowledge to the requirements of his people, the Thracians, who still lacked any vestige of civilization. He was able to calm primitive men through fables and music, and to lead them towards religion and a certain perception of God (*Archaeologia*, pp. 406-7). Burnet rejects Gale's assessment of Orpheus' thought; he claims that Orpheus taught that there was only one God and implied the existence of the Trinity. Orpheus was supposed to have spoken of an original chaos from which the Earth had been created, saying that originally the universe was made up of ether, which had included the Earth and the stars, igneous bodies covering an infinite heaven which moved within the universe. Orpheus' doctrine of the Earth demonstrated his knowledge of the perfect primordial state and its

oval form. He also spoke of the final prospect of fire and the Earth's renewal (*Archaeologia*, pp. 411-13).

In its philosophical stage, Greek thought did not forget the original doctrine, but made considerable advances in experimental investigations and the precise sciences, studying specific questions alongside the cosmological synthesis. At this time, the appearance of different philosophical schools did not impede the development of Oriental doctrines. Thales was purely a physiologist and the first to investigate nature "without fables or theological commentaries", and he came close to Moses' theories by placing water at the very beginning in both a physical and metaphysical sense (*Archaeologia*, pp. 416-17). Anaxagoras attempted to create an overall physical and teleological perception and developed the concept of *Mens* that ordered the elements out of chaos, placing earth at the centre, and successively water, air, and fire (*Archaeologia*, pp. 417-19). The Ionic School under Anaxagoras almost came to an understanding of the heliocentric universe — his hesitance over this theory was due to his reluctance to introduce unusual and strange concepts to the common people. Thus the process of concealment, which had already figured in Oriental wisdom, reappeared in the very early stages of Greek natural philosophy (*Archaeologia*, pp. 420-23).

The Italic School, founded by Pythagoras, also made its contribution to the study of natural philosophy and cosmology, though the doctrines of the founder were not handed down with sufficient clarity. From what could be inferred, according to Burnet, it did not appear that the school had made a significant contribution. Although it understood the mobility of the Earth, the centrality of the sun, and the fluidity of the heavens, the Italic School wasted its time on sterile interpretation of numbers connected with their doctrine of the Earth and the elements. The reason for this could be found in the uncertain relationship in Pythagoras' work between true doctrine and common doctrine, destined for his disciples. This method of concealment proved so obscure that it became difficult to understand the doctrine itself. The use of numbers to communicate doctrines turned out to be more misleading than the use of myths or fanciful imagery.

The ancients before Pythagoras enveloped their Theology and Philosophy in fables. For this reason much of the true doctrine, oppressed by the burden of fables, perished with the passage of time. Having rejected fables, Pythagoras substituted numbers, with no happier a result. For little by little those shadows of things faded and fled from our senses. For who has ever come out wiser from the Pythagorean numbers? (*Quis enim sapientior unquam evasit ex numeris Pythagoricis?*) or thereafter learned a truth unknown to him before? (*Archaeologia*, p. 426).

A Pythagorean number might relate to a profound physical or metaphysical reality, but it risks degenerating into a sterile symbolistic game — which had

been the fate of Pythagorean thought. It broke with the original doctrine of God and the world in the tradition of Moses and Orpheus, and was lost in the confusion of number patterns that made Cabbalistic doctrines so absurd (*Archaeologia*, pp. 427–8).

Burnet argues that if numbers were interpreted as the essence of things and that all physical realities derived from them, then the Pythagorean doctrine was unfounded and totally incoherent. "It is plain that numbers can generate nothing except numbers; beyond this they have no power or efficacy. They can indeed, in their own way, represent degrees and kinds of things, but they are not able to produce; and they cannot supply substitutions for matter in the production of things" (*Archaeologia*, p. 428). The principal defect of the Pythagorean position is in turning physics "into mathematical relations, numbers, and proportions", that is, in not constraining natural reality in its own components and evolution. As numbers are abstract, they are not able to account for the origins of things. This explains the diversity of views in the Pythagorean School concerning the doctrine of the elements. Pherecydes spoke of his cosmogony of the Earth and the Ocean, and Empedocles of four elements linked in harmony through the workings of love (*Archaeologia*, pp. 429–30). The Pythagoreans therefore adopted somewhat backward doctrines in natural philosophy and were not able to repeat the profound perceptions of Orpheus, who had been Pythagoras' starting point.

Burnet characterized the history of Greek thought as alternating between a departure from and a return to the Orphic doctrines on the Creation. Speculative abstractions that impeded a concrete approach to nature alternated with a lively interest in physical phenomena and genuine attempts at cosmological synthesis. Thus in the Eleatic school there were Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Melissus, who, denying motion or declaring it only apparent, suggested going beyond the reality of the senses to "abstract and immutable relations" (*Archaeologia*, pp. 432–3), while Leucippus and Democritus, rejecting the search for the principles of bodies through abstract notions, investigated in the bodies themselves the conditions of their existence: "motion, shape, location of parts, refinement or magnitude, and the like" (*Archaeologia*, p. 433). Burnet does not accept the atomistic theory of this part of the Eleatic School, but he approves of their "healthier method of studying nature". He also claims that Leucippus' concept of the Earth was exactly the same as Moses', and that Democritus embraced the entire Mosaic doctrine following his numerous contacts with Oriental thought (*Archaeologia*, pp. 436–7). The Stoic school rejected incorporeal substances and considered matter to be the only substance — an important contribution to theories on the Earth and the universe. The Stoic theory of the conflagration, based on the fact that fire was the most noble element in matter, was also important for the comprehension of the cosmic and terrestrial events. (*Archaeologia*, pp. 437–8).

Platonic physics oscillated between its loyalty to Orphism and its adoption of Pythagorean ideas. According to Burnet, Plato argued in the *Timaeus* for such abstract concepts as the geometric interpretation of the various elements that constituted reality and the doctrine of the world soul. On the other hand, if taken as a whole, his doctrine also picked up fundamental aspects of the Egyptian view of creation, perceiving the principles of reality in God, matter, and ideas (*Archaeologia*, pp. 438-40). The underlying theological character of Platonic philosophy explains this incorporation of the profound significance of the Earth's history, and his penetrating theological analysis of the Creation, the Flood, and the conflagration compensated for the shortcomings of his natural doctrines. After Plato, this ability to understand the ancient theory of creation was lost. Purely natural investigation took no account of theological, metaphysical, and cosmological premisses, and restricted itself to the elements of a given reality. This indifference to the history of the Earth, the Flood, and related questions was total in the case of Aristotle and Epicurus. We have arrived, writes Burnet, "at the dregs (*faeces*) of philosophy".

From the times of Plato to the beginning of the current century, that whole interval I consider aphiosophical; since the intermediate age neither retained the ancient wisdom nor discovered a new one, but engaged in a certain garrulous and loquacious wisdom without honesty. With Plato ancient philosophy faltered; his followers are wise only in [knowing] Greek, and no one of them is numbered among the ancient philosophers. As for Aristotle and his school, in that argument we are considering, they have nothing clear or firm to say on the origins of things (*Archaeologia*, p. 441).

The demise of the philosophy *de originibus* lasted for Burnet until the modern age and the renewed interest in Platonism and ancient wisdom. There is no false modesty in Burnet's claim to have made a considerable contribution to this return to the discussion of origins in his *Telluris theoria sacra*.

According to his view the whole of philosophy, and not just cosmology and matters concerning the Creation, had been affected by these centuries of incoherence. Progress in natural philosophy and all other forms of study had been impeded by the Aristotelian doctrines of the fixed nature of matter and the eternity of the world, and by his absurd positions on natural places. He describes Aristotle as "a bad Astronomer, a worse Theologian, the worst Physicist (*malus Astronomus, Theologus pejus, Physiologus pessimus*)". Aristotle believed the Earth to be the immobile centre of an unchanging universe, in an implausible state of eternal perfection that excluded the intervention of divine providence in the sublunar world. His authority grew over the centuries to the exclusion of the opposing view of the world in a state of transformation.

Since these things are so, and such was the philosophy of Aristotle,

we really can hardly be astonished at the stupor of the Christian world (*Orbis Christiani stuporem*), which embraced this discipline alone through so many centuries, and sang its praises to the sky, and publicly commended it to be taught and lectured on to schools and academies. They even made it inviolable by sanction, and there were charges against those dissenting with Aristotle, or attempting new philosophy, as though against heretics and the enemies of the Christian religion. Hence the progress of the sciences has been retarded (*Hinc tardi scientiarum progressus*), and for so many centuries, in which this philosophy has grown strong, nothing has been discovered, nothing useful contributed to human life (*nulla inventa, nulla com-moda attulit humanae vitae*); but how many volumes of commentaries, huge and useless? (*quot volumina commentariorum, magna et inutilia?*) How many bright intellects, constrained to bear this servile yoke, have laboured in vain to cultivate this fruitless path alone? The Christian world grows sterile, like watered sand, wherever this philosophy has been disseminated (*Sterilescebat orbis christianus, quasi area conspersus, ubicunque haec philosophia disseminata fuit*) (*Archaeologia*, pp. 442-3).

The tyranny of Aristotelianism aided the tyranny of the Church, stamping out all voices of dissent. Burnet implies that the renewed attention to the universe and the Earth represent a new way of understanding the Christian faith in relation to science, after centuries of Aristotelian conformism.

The return to a total theory of the Creation must clear away the materialism represented in ancient thought by Epicurus as well as the immutability of Aristotelianism. While Leucippus' and Democritus' atomistic synthesis made use of both reality perceived through the senses and an overall vision, Epicurus' theory was too tightly linked to sensation to be able to devise a doctrine of the Creation.

He [Epicurus] corrupted rather than emended the doctrines of Democritus and Leucippus. He did not know the oldest ancient-barbarian things, and was unequal to finding new ones. He philosophized loosely and with wandering reasoning (*Philosophatur laxè et per rationes fluctuantes*), which neither challenged the mind nor compelled assent, unless, in parts, one should favour the natural disposition of Epicurus for his own sake (*Archaeologia*, p. 444).

The theory of the 'turning aside' (*clinamen*) makes it impossible to create a coherent atomistic theory and deprives it of any scientific basis, and equally precludes a world that undergoes transformations. Although much of the seventeenth century judged Epicureanism positively, Burnet argues very strongly that it misinterpreted atomism, which if correctly assessed has a role to play in the return to a dynamic concept of nature.

Burnet's view of physics is based on the significant contributions of all

ancient doctrines and the rejection of a rigid teleology and mechanistic sensationalism, which opened the way to a more extensive teleology founded on the evolutionary dynamism of matter. The conclusion to the *Archaeologia* appears to emphasize the importance of ancient wisdom and Greek philosophy, by pointing out that in modern times cosmological and physical views in the tradition of Noah, Moses, and the Egyptians were still to be found in some Eastern philosophies. Even if only in fragments, the concepts of the Earth and its layers, the Creation, the Flood, and the conflagration had retained great vitality amongst the Brahmins of the East. These doctrines had not been adequately analysed or developed with sufficient logic and had been scattered amongst different Oriental peoples without markedly informing their more general concepts. Burnet hoped that Western thinkers would make use of these doctrines to enrich and develop their own philosophies and that there would be a diffusion amongst all humanity of the true concept of the Creation, which would serve as a step towards pacification and spiritual progress (*Archaeologia*, p. 544).

2.4.4. Book 1 of the *Archaeologia philosophica* alternates between a demonstration of how Burnet's interpretation of Moses' concept of the Creation agrees with other ancient concepts, and a scholarly analysis of the doctrines of each people and sect — the latter purpose tends to be the dominant one. He analyses the general characteristics of each people that interests him, focusing on their philosophical methods, explaining their doctrines with the aid of classical and patristic sources and revealing which thinkers were responsible for spreading them abroad. There are very few biographical references, and when discussing Pythagoras he laments that we have an abundance of information on his life, travels, and habits, but very little detail of his doctrines (*Archaeologia*, p. 424). Ample space is given to the nature of the sources for the doctrines discussed and the channels by which they were handed down. At the end of each chapter or part of a chapter dedicated to a philosophical school, he examines in detail the extant works and fragments, and all other works that could provide information on their doctrines. He assesses the reliability of those sources in the reconstruction of the doctrines of natural philosophy pertaining the origins of the Earth.

This approach allows him to analyse a people's awareness of the problems of the Creation and its affinity to Mosaic doctrines. He thus carries out his principal purpose of constantly comparing ancient doctrines on the Creation with the Bible. His method of historical analysis does not allow him to develop an explicit theory about the agreement between peoples on certain fundamental doctrines, but he draws analogies between them and biblical accounts. His method does not appear dull or stilted, and he is skilled in slipping his comparisons into a systematic study of the doctrines. When, for example, he speaks of the wisdom of the Phoenicians, he discusses some

doctrines of Sanchuniathon, examining the evidence in Eusebius' account, and observes, "These doctrines are precisely in agreement with ours (*Haec doctrinae nostrae prorsus consentiunt*)"; but he prefers not to develop this observation further and refers the reader to his *Telluris theoria sacra* (*Archaeologia*, p. 361). In the case of atomistic philosophy, he analyses Leucippus' theory of the Earth, using Diogenes Laertius, who — although a fragmentary and uncertain source — reveals some extremely apt analogies between the doctrines of Leucippus and Moses. Burnet skilfully sorts through and brings together the texts in order to eliminate their obscurity, entirely due to Laertius' limited understanding of theory. The comparison of Moses' doctrine with Leucippus' view is thus established by the restitution of a more accurate understanding of the latter, which had been distorted by Diogenes Laertius (*Archaeologia*, p. 434).

The analysis of the wisdom of each people in relation to the 'theory of the earth' leads to a critical attitude towards the better-known sapiential sources. Burnet feels that it is his task to evaluate the authenticity of the writings on which we base our knowledge of ancient wisdom. He starts by denying the philosophical content of the *Chaldean Oracles*, which he defines as "a patch-work, mixed up and interwoven out of the writings of the ancients (not just of the ancients, for I have not yet discovered citations from Plato)" (*Archaeologia*, p. 349; see also pp. 350, 352–4). His criticisms go straight to the point and are not without a certain sarcastic tone. He questions the significance of the Chaldean doctrines, which Giovanni Pico della Mirandola believed to be so full of wisdom, and comments that they seem like the shades of the dead (*Archaeologia*, p. 350).

Burnet works on the assumption that some traditions of wisdom have been lost or cannot be fully reconstructed, but that they really existed and had developed or inherited fundamental and wide-ranging doctrines. Burnet's criticism is not simply an exercise in historical scepticism, but seeks to preserve the authentic wisdom on the Creation from misinterpretations and dangerous conjecture. The existence of ancient wisdom is never brought into question, and it is felt that a rigorous criticism will increase the authority of the ancient doctrines. The wisdom of Hermes Trismegistus, for example, is perceived as historical fact, even though it is not documented in the spurious *Corpus hermeticum*. Although the genuine Hermetic doctrines were handed down by Egyptian priests and can barely be reconstructed, Hermes was a historical fact to be defended from the distortions and inventions of later writers (*Archaeologia*, pp. 382–3).

The Thracian Orpheus was a similar case. His writings were lost, but his doctrine was a major influence in the history of Greek philosophy. However, Burnet believes that the *Orphic Hymns*, although not authentic, might constitute a true reflection of Orpheus' thought, because the Orphic tradition was less mysterious than the Hermetic one. Many poets and thinkers were

ready to sing the praises of Orpheus and refer to his beliefs (*Archaeologia*, p. 409). Although Burnet admitted that some saw fit to deny the doctrine or even the existence of Orpheus (Cicero, Origen in his polemic against Celsus, or in modern times Vossius), there were also a great many authors who wrote extensively on his life and thought; he believed it was not possible to deny the existence of such an authoritative figure, and that objective analysis did not permit one to cast doubt on an entire doctrine because of spurious texts (*Archaeologia*, pp. 413–15).

His study of the Phoenician tradition is another example of his careful analysis of ancient thought. He does not agree that the Phoenicians developed corpuscular theory out of some of Moses' ideas — a belief that had considerable currency amongst the English. More, Cudworth, and even Gale believed that Mochus or Moschus was the author of an atomistic view of the world free from materialist and atheist hypotheses. Burnet believes that Leucippus and Democritus were the first to construct this doctrine and that they were unconsciously adopting some of Moses' ideas, though in a distorted form. Thus, at the same time, he manages to restore the doctrine to its actual authors and exclude from the ancient *sapientiae* a doctrine which might clash with their underlying orientation. Cudworth had been forced to make the corpuscular theory agree with the doctrine of *prisca theologia* and turn it into a dynamistic view of matter, opposed to Aristotelian hylo-morphism. Burnet argues that Democritus' theory differs from the Mosaic concept of the Creation and the Flood because it is not consistent with the concept of original chaos (*Archaeologia*, p. 361). He has strong doubts about the antiquity of mechanistic atomism and attempts to back them up with historical arguments.

According to his view, the Stoic philosopher Posidonius was the first to attribute atomism to Moschus or Mochus, and many more have followed this up with other doubtful formulas; however, Cicero, a contemporary of Posidonius who had similar ideas, did not accept this interpretation. Burnet held that that one had to be very cautious about the idea of this doctrine existing in Phoenician wisdom. From the times of the Trojan Wars, the Phoenicians had a belief in "traditional philosophy (*philosophia traditiva*)", based not on reason and causal explanation but on the transmission of very ancient concepts (*Archaeologia*, p. 360). The nucleus of doctrines that Burnet variously attributes to Moses and Noah is very important to him, and he explains its continuing existence through the traditionalism that characterizes all the most ancient Oriental thought, which collected previous doctrines, preserved them, wrote glosses on them, but never questioned their premises or arguments. If the wisdom of ancient peoples had been based on the preservation of its traditions and had subordinated critical reason, then it was possible to recreate their doctrines on the origins of the Earth from Chaos to the Flood. Historical analysis was then called upon to reject the

attribution of doctrines based on scientific hypotheses to ancient thought. The purpose was not to demonstrate the fanciful nature of ancient doctrines, but to isolate the original nucleus, which was rationally organized but not subjected to the rigour of proof.

The study of the Cabbala is essential to Burnet's criticism, and he aims to prove that the Cabbalistic method devised by Renaissance and modern Cabbalists could not be applied to the Mosaic doctrines to recreate ancient Jewish wisdom. He believed that the contemporary Cabbalistic doctrine was destitute of any rational foundation or structure. In the case of Mochus' doctrine, the problem was that scientific and rational method that could not be attributed to so ancient a doctrine — but in the case of the Cabbala, it was the question of how numbers and letters could have been used symbolically. He believed that Jewish wisdom with its solid and straightforward doctrinal tradition could not have been familiar with such a fantastic procedure and such complicated explanations, for which there had been no need. Post-Mosaic Cabbala rejects reason:

We all go crazy with theory sometimes, but it is a disease of the mind common among Orientals to go crazy with Allegories, and one characteristic of the Jews to go crazy with their Cabbala (*Cum ratione quandoque insanimus omnes: sed est morbus animi Orientalibus communis cum Allegoriis insanire et Judaeis proprius, cum sua Cabbala*) (*Archaeologia*, p. 372).

Although not itself based on reason, the ancient Cabbala accepted the totality of the doctrinal tradition, which was the expression of a profound rationality. The modern Cabbala, on the other hand, misinterpreted the authentic doctrine *de rerum originibus*, not so much because it followed the emanationist view to be found in the ancient Cabbala and complicated it with bizarre theories, but because its allegorical interpretation prevented any chance of an interpretation of Genesis that could reconcile religious and scientific data. He explains that the purpose of his analysis of the Cabbala was not to disprove doctrines, as it was impossible to disprove what was obscure by definition ("for what is carefully concealed in the shadows cannot be repulsed (*repelli enim non potest quod in tenebris absconditur*)"), but to describe a method of studying God's word. Thus he concludes:

Meanwhile, I have forewarned and opposed with all my might (*praemonui, et pro viribus obstiti*), lest it harm the foolhardy and lead them by a blind path into errors. "The first wisdom is to have been free from folly (*Sapientia prima est, stultitiae caruisse*)"; and the first step to truth, *to guard against errors*. To avoid which, in the study of wisdom, let it always have the force of law, that to no authority except the divine, to no reason except the clear and the distinct (*nulli rationi praeter clarae et distinctae*), must faith be wholly given (*Archaeologia*, p. 376).

This obsession of Burnet explains the lengthy confutation of the modern Cabbala, the first of its kind from a member of the Cambridge Platonist circle. Taking up Gale's diffidence towards mysticism, Burnet enlarged on the polemic, ridiculing the procedural doctrines and laying the foundations for a rational and historical criticism. In the field of history of philosophy, this led to rejection of the Cabbala as a tradition that reappeared in the Renaissance and enriched religious thought. Later historical works did not refer, as Buddeus did, to 'eclectic Cabbalism' or to the Cabbala as a genuine product of Jewish wisdom. Burnet was aware that allegorical interpretation could not be based on the doctrine of numbers and letters and that the meaning of Genesis should not be confused with the Cabbalists' teleological and cosmological opinions. He therefore rejects the temptation to carry out an exegesis based on a definition of all aspects of divine, angelic, and spiritual realities. He asserts that the meaning of a sacred doctrine could not be interpreted thoroughly through the definition of trivial details. It was necessary to separate out the essential elements, those that could not be known to man and those that were of no importance.

It is helpful in any event, I do not deny, sometimes in the imagination, as on a tablet, to contemplate the image of a greater and better world, lest the mind, accustomed to the minutiae of everyday life, narrow itself overmuch and sink all into petty thoughts. But meanwhile the truth must be watched over, and a limit observed, so that we may distinguish the certain from uncertain things (*certe ab incertis*), day from night. For it is the mark of a wise man, not only to know those things that can be known, but also to discern and discriminate among those things that cannot be known (*sed etiam, quae sciri non possunt, discernere et discriminare*) (*Archaeologia*, pp. 376-7).

In his pages devoted to the Cabbala, Burnet initiates a very strong polemic against mysticism and obscurantism. The Cabbala constitutes, for him, the major argument of mystical wisdom, whose exaggerated symbolism is totally different from the true heritage of the ancient doctrines. On the one hand, there were the simple, even crude, formulations of some ancient doctrines that reflected the backwardness of the people who adopted them, and on the other, the intentionally obscure formulations, full of allusions and imagery, that pointed to deception and falsehood.

Whatever we ourselves understand clearly and distinctly, we willingly expound to others in an intelligible way. But when we affect a mystical knowledge, we feign mysteries where there are none, or we persuade the credulous with ambiguous and sonorous words that something great lies beneath, and that we indeed understand it but are unwilling to spread such sacred things among the crowd. Hence I always suspect of ineptitude and imposture those who seek hiding places and are afraid of speaking openly (*Quamobrem, qui latibula*

querunt, et sibi metuunt ab aperta oratione, semper mihi suspecti sunt de ineptiis, vel imposturis) (*Archaeologia*, p. 369).

This symbolic procedure did not hide any deep meaning, only darkness and emptiness. Burnet rails against the Cabbalistic method:

Good God, what a heap of things and words! (*Deus bone, quae strues rerum et verborum!*) Without lime or sand, without binding, without order, without relationship (*Sine calce et arena, sine nexu, sine ordine, sine cognatione*). Traditional, foreign, jumped-up expressions (*Locutiones tralatitiae, peregrinae, obortae*). They promise expositions and they produce riddles (*aenigmata*) or rambling dreams (*vaga somnia*), and while they profess themselves interpreters, they confound the argument with blind circumlocutions. What else is this than to make sport of the human mind? And in place of solid truth, to propound the shadows of things or naked fictions (*Et pro veritate solida, rerum umbras aut nuda figmenta proponere*) (*Archaeologia*, p. 367).

For Burnet, true doctrines can be expressed by rational language or in fanciful forms, but there must be a non-literal interpretation that reveals the genuine meaning. He thus distinguishes between two types of doctrines that use non-rational discourse: those doctrines that can be translated into rational philosophy by means of suitable interpretative methods and those based on fanciful linguistic games that attempt to encourage non-rational beliefs in pseudo-magical formulas (*Archaeologia*, p. 389). His criticism of the latter group is intended to defend those doctrines that use imagery to conceal genuine ideas. This is linked to his attempt to rediscover the nucleus of the original truths and to defend it from those who refute or distort it.

For philosophical fables always have something of the foundation in the thing itself (*Fabulae enim philosophicae semper habent aliquid fundamenti in re ipsa*); the threads are true, but false colours are superimposed . . . Therefore those only are philosophical beneath whose fabulous shell is the truth (*Eae igitur tantum sunt philosophicae, quarum fabuloso cortici subest veritas*), and that is uncommon. For the authors of mythological philosophy seem to have proposed this to themselves, in order to save arcane doctrine from destruction, and yet not to expose it to the crowd or to vulgar intellects. Divine Providence, which controls the reins of all the ages and of the falling world, tempers and keeps hidden the knowledge of divine and natural things, so that the truth may not shine forth clearly except in its own time; at the same time it should be understood that where it has shone forth, the same truth has lain concealed and in divers ways veiled among men, since the first ages of the world (*Archaeologia*, p. 391).

Burnet's study of the relationship between Egyptian and Greek thought is typical of this search for genuine mythical doctrines. He did not consider the

Egyptian sapiential doctrines, although expressed through obscure hieroglyphics and in fanciful forms, vain or empty; on the contrary, for him, they constituted the major source of Orphic, Pythagorean, and Platonic thought (*Archaeologia*, pp. 389-90, 392, 402-4). Burnet is determined to prove that classical Greek thought was closely linked to ancient thought through Orphism, although representing progress in methodology and rational procedures and a widening of the area of research. Egyptian mythological philosophy was very ancient and derived from the original wisdom and the direct knowledge of reality. In the mythical period, Greeks quickly assimilated this philosophical method, turning it into a reliable instrument of true wisdom (*Archaeologia*, pp. 391-2). Orphic thought allowed Greek civilization to develop ancient concepts successfully and to engage in philosophical debate. In his analysis of Orphism, he emphasizes the suitability of mythological philosophy to the times and to the summary of questions concerning the Creation. He also clearly differentiates between the Orphic doctrines and obscure pseudo-mythological doctrines. Orpheus' clear purpose was to teach philosophy to his people and remove them from the ferocious life-style of the woodland. He therefore prepared his account of the origins of the Earth in order to lead them gradually towards the truth. He immersed a complete doctrine in suggestive imagery, which then served as a reference point to the later developments of Greek thought. His vision of the universe, the Earth, and man was designed to avoid both pedantic analysis and empty abstractions, and to assist naturalistic investigation and cosmological synthesis.

The history of Greek thought after the mythological stage demonstrated the reduction of nature to number or logical terminology by the Pythagoreans and Aristotle. The abstract concepts on movement held by Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Melissus, and Epicurus' pure sensationalism, could not create an overall understanding of the Earth, precisely because they had strayed so far from Orphism and therefore from Mosaic and Egyptian wisdom. Burnet carries these arguments further and suggests some interesting changes to the traditional view based on Laertius. The Eleatic sect, for instance, is described as a 'composite' sect and is no longer considered one of the principal sects in Greek philosophy, given that it lacks a unifying factor. While Parmenides and his followers were distancing themselves from Orphic cosmology and becoming involved in monistic abstractions, Leucippus and Democritus were moving much closer to it in their natural study of atoms. Burnet claims that, by his comparison with Orphism, he is able to distinguish between two currents that the doxographic tradition had artificially brought together.

While philologists had only been able to lump together atomists and genuine Eleatics with the single criterion of the geographical area in which they worked, Burnet uses philosophical analysis to divide them into two groups based on their different philosophical frameworks. This example

throws light on the methodology of the *Archaeologia*: his theory of authentic wisdom and its expression in fanciful but authentic forms underlies a method that continually distinguishes between the authentic and the inauthentic. These conceptual distinctions clearly require a philosophical approach. Bk. I of the *Archaeologia* is a philosophical investigation of the ancient doctrines concerning the beginning. Burnet clearly states that he prefers a philosophical approach to philosophical texts. He cites Diogenes Laertius as an example of a good historian but also "hardly a philosopher (*parum philosophus*)", who constantly misinterpreted the doctrines he was examining. Laertius did not entirely understand Leucippus' theory of the Earth and was therefore unable to explain it fully (*Archaeologia*, p. 434). Equally, he could not properly illustrate Anaxagoras' doctrines on the heavens and the vacuum of the heavenly bodies in *primaevio mundo*, and thus contributed to a limited interpretation of the Ionian philosopher's natural doctrines that had persisted (*Archaeologia*, pp. 418-19). According to Burnet, Laertius not only referred to distorted and confused versions of Platonic doctrines, but also further distorted them through his lack of understanding (*Archaeologia*, p. 440). He concludes these assessments by inviting philosophers to take on the task of history of philosophy themselves. The lack of any reference to Stanley's *History* is also significant in this context.

Burnet's method does not, however, differ from that of the scholarly polyhistorian. The attempt at an 'archaeological' effort at reconstruction did not permit the invention of different tools of investigation on the spur of the moment. The need for a philosophical interpretation of the philosophical texts is thus only half carried out: the careful study of a text's identity and its meaning is wedded to an attempt to establish a dialogue and a confrontation with the ancient doctrines. In the case of Oriental wisdom and Greek philosophies, Burnet is particularly interested in explaining them within the context of the overall questions concerning the origins of the Earth. He is often tempted to conceptualize the differences between ancient doctrines and philosophy in the Christian tradition by clarifying such terms as 'creation out of nothing', 'emanation', 'fate', 'providence', and 'eternity'. The analysis of these concepts is distributed throughout the work; he deals with his subject philosophy by philosophy, and as a result the novelty of his thesis is obscured. There is an interesting slant to the philosophical discussion: the discarding of superfluous detail, the simplification of doctrines, the constant desire to emphasize what new contribution was to found in each philosophy, and the relationship between philosophies on a purely speculative level.

Burnet's historiography takes a new look at the ancient sapiential heritage for the twin purpose of evaluating the doctrines and purging them of errors or misinterpretations. He ends up with a rational-historical criticism and the attempt to revive wisdom as the starting point of doctrines. This mixture of attitudes makes it impossible to define his history of philosophy as

completely new or solely as criticism. There is nothing in the text to justify its interpretation as a work of progressivism in a pre-Enlightenment or libertine sense. Burnet merely wishes to clarify the ancient philosophies. In place of the original divine revelation, there is an original doctrine that can be described as revealed only in the sense that primitive humanity had a natural revelation to the origin of things. There can be no doubt about the innovation of this position, but he does not carry out a radical reassessment of the *sapientiae*, but only restricts himself to clearing away those that had been already badly compromised or based on unreliable sources. The original unity of this doctrine on the natural philosophy of the beginnings of the Earth is used to explain the general agreement amongst all peoples on the history of the Earth and the Great Flood. This leads to the rejection of the Neoplatonic concept of *prisca theologia* and replaces it with one that is almost scientific. However, it does not eliminate the essence of the concept and even increases the importance of certain elements such as Egyptian wisdom and Orphism. The *Archaeologia philosophica* still holds on to the concept that one truth had existed at the beginning of the history of thought, but changed its general characteristics. Burnet attempts to update it with the aid of historical criticism and by presenting human history as alternating between periods of happiness and precariousness. The result is a kind of eschatological rationalism and a secularized Christianity that gives prime importance to the beginning of the world and its final state, while interpreting the intervening history as a period of uncertainty and transience — its truth is proven by the way ancient thought goes back to a single point of origin.

2.5. Burnet's writings had considerable success, because of the innovatory nature of his theses and the polemics to which they gave rise. Although influential, the *Archaeologia philosophica* was less successful than the *Telluris theoria sacra*. The work was most famous for the way it linked the theory of the Earthly Paradise and the original sin with the theory of the Flood and the catastrophes. The history of philosophy contained in the first book was therefore somewhat overlooked, although no-one denied the scholarly contribution that the author had made. However, it became difficult to assess the *Archaeologia* objectively, following the storm over its supposed naturalistic tone — people adopted positions for and against Burnet's method of interpreting the Bible. For example, the polemical work by the theologian Jean Graverol, *Moses vindicatus; sive asserta Historiae creationis mundi aliarumque quales a Mose narrantur veritas* (Amsterdam, 1694), is concerned only with the refutation of the theories contained in the second book and ignores the philosophical review in the first. On the other hand, the 'libertine' thinker Charles Blount wrote 'A Letter to my Worthy Friend Mr. Gildon in Vindication of Dr. Burnet', published in *Oracles of Reason* (London, 1693), in

which he expresses his approval of the historical section on the basis of its link to the theories concerning the Earth, the Flood, and the common doctrinal heritage amongst different peoples. Blount thought that the first book was a store of information that could be used in reviews such as the one he himself had published on the doctrines of the soul, *Anima Mundi: Or An Historical Narration of the Opinions of the Ancients Concerning Man's Soul After this Life* (Amsterdam, 1678). Blount translated chs. 7–8 of Vol. II of the *Archaeologia* (pp. 20–76) and the appendix on the ‘modern Brahmins’ (pp. 77–86) and published them in *Oracles of Reason* in order to discuss the non-literal interpretation of the Mosaic text.

Le Clerc fully recognized the importance of Burnet's work, and in the *Bibliothèque universelle et historique* he claimed that as a historical project it was very similar to Stanley's, but with the useful addition of a careful analysis of Oriental thought in relation to Greek thought (*BUH*, xxiv (1693), pp. 450–55). Le Clerc made this comparison not so much because both works dealt with the same arguments, as because the *Archaeologia* was based on the same criteria of objectivity and use of reliable sources that had inspired Stanley, even though Burnet had denied the latter's significance. Le Clerc noticed only the scholarly nature of the work but failed to notice the ‘philosophical’ approach to the history of philosophy. In the *Histoire des ouvrages des savants* (March 1693), pp. 391–409, the Oriental scholar Jacques Basnage spoke of the *Archaeologia*'s merits as a history of philosophy, and discussed in some depth the concept of historical research as archaeology. Although not particularly enamoured of Burnet's theory in the second book, he recognized the effort put into the revival of ancient wisdom and the search for its origins. It is clear, however, that he was more interested in the historical than the theoretical aspects of the work.

Heumann had no doubts about the importance of the *Archaeologia* as a historical work, and he considered Burnet to be the author who had understood history in greatest depth (Heumann, Vol. III, p. 298). Unlike Le Clerc, Heumann, who was extremely interested in the method of philosophical historiography, argued that the theoretical framework imposed itself too strongly on the work. He used his subtle irony to show how Burnet went to all lengths to find doctrines that backed up his hypothesis of the Earth and his preconceptions of antiquity; his criticism of Burnet's interpretation of Orphism is particularly acute (Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 331–2). Heumann had rejected the concept of a perfect and primordial philosophical doctrine, in favour of a radical critique of wisdom. He, therefore, found Burnet's method somewhat curious, given the latter's declared critical intentions and philosophical approach. Because of these reservations, he restricts himself in the *Acta* to commenting on Burnet's moderation and caution, and praising his speculative ability (Heumann, Vol. III, p. 301). He was of the opinion that, instead of continuously testing out his own theories, Burnet

should have followed the example of Stanley's general approach and such works as Conring's *De hermetica medicina*, which approached Egyptian thought in purely historical terms (Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 339-41).

The *Archaeologia* was thus considered a history of philosophy that adopted a philosophical approach, while retaining many outdated perceptions that undermined much of the argumentation. Brucker shared this assessment and, probably for this reason, did not refer to it as one of the *historiae philosophicae*, and only commented on it in his chapter on Burnet's *philosophica mosaica*. He admired Burnet's attempt at a rational and historical criticism of ancient thought and accepted the assessment of the biographer William Wotton that Burnet maintained an independent position in relation to the Cambridge Platonists, but he did not think Burnet was right to use the results of his research to back up his arguable theory of the Earth, which had turned out to be no more than a "fine story" (Brucker, Vol. IV, pp. 620-24). Diderot's entry in the *Encyclopédie* (3rd edn; Livourne, 1773), Vol. X, pp. 677-8, s.v. 'Mosaïque et chrétienne, philosophie', was probably based on Brucker's assessment. He stated that the theory of the Earth was "a story that much honoured the author's imagination (*une fable qui fait beaucoup d'honneur à l'esprit de l'auteur*)" and that it was at the very least questionable that all ancient peoples had known of the Mosaic cosmogony. These views led to the historical part of Burnet's work being overlooked in eighteenth-century culture, which was only marginally influenced by its critical approach. The only real influence of the *Archaeologia* was on Brucker's *Historia critica*, where Brucker questioned the authenticity of the better-known works of ancient wisdom and wrote a diatribe against speculative traditions. Brucker admired Burnet's critical approach to the attribution of atomism to the Phoenicians and agreed with his general interpretation of Oriental thought as based on the handing down of traditions (*philosophia traditiva*) (Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 232-4). He made considerable use of the *Archaeologia* for his analysis of Pythagorean thought (Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 1046-7), modern Cabbala (Brucker, Vol. II, p. 954 — the arguments are the same as those in the *Archaeologia*), Egyptian thought (Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 257-309), and Orphism, which Brucker however considered part of a pantheistic tradition (the source of Spinozism) that lacked rigour and soundness (Brucker, Vol. I, pp. 381-2, 386, 393-4).

In the early eighteenth century, Burnet's criticisms of the Cabbala were rather badly received amongst historians with a tendency to Eclecticism. Buddeus, for example, decisively rejected the negative interpretation of the doctrine of the *sefiroth* and claimed that the modern Cabbala was in fact linked to the ancient one (*Introductio in historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum* (Halle, 1720), pp. 345, 360-61, 365-7, 396-7). A few decades later, Brucker and Deslandes were to take the negative reappraisal of Cabbalistic doctrines for granted; indeed, so much so that they practically forgot to mention

Burnet's role in the criticism of inauthentic *sapientiae*. The reason for this attitude was that the *Archaeologia* did not set out to destroy the ancient *sapientiae*, but to recover what was genuine in each of them. The distinction between authentic wisdom, concealed in fantasy and myth, and inauthentic wisdom was not perceived by most scholars as a critical instrument, but simply as part of the author's attempt to revive certain ideas and link them to his highly suspect theories. Thus the valid historical arguments contained in the *Archaeologia* were ignored, and its importance as a criticism was not recognized.²

2.6. On his life, character and works:

A. Heumann, 'T. B. Lebens-Lauff', Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 434-9 (reproduces W. Wotton's *T. B. Elogium*, pp. 435-9); Jöcher, Vol. I, col. 1505; R. Heathcote, 'Life of T. B.', published at the beginning of T. B., *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (London, 1759); s.v. 'B., T.', in *Biographia Britannica*, Vol. III (London, 1784), pp. 16-20; s.v. 'B., T.', in *Nuovo dizionario istorico*, Vol. III (Bassano, 1796), pp. 414-15; BUAM, VIII, p. 383; T. Hofer, *Nouvelle biographie générale* (Paris, 1854), Vol. VIII, pp. 858-9; O. Zöckler, *Geschichte der Beziehungen zwischen Theologie und Naturwissenschaft in besonderer Rücksicht auf Schöpfungsgeschichte* (Gütersloh, 1877-9), Vol. II, pp. 144-54; L. Stephen, s.v. 'B., T.', in DNB, III, pp. 408-10; E. Haller, *Die barocken Stilmerkmale in der englischen lateinischen und deutschen Fassung von Dr. T. B. 'Theory of the Earth'* (Bern, 1940); F. L. Tuveson, *Millenium and Utopia: A Study in the Background of the Idea of Progress* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949), pp. 113-203; N. Badaloni, *Introduzione a G. B. Vico* (Milan, 1961), pp. 172-6; M. H. Nicholson, *The Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (New York, 1963), pp. 184-270; D. P. Walker, *The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century Discussions of Eternal Torment* (Chicago, 1964), pp. 156-66; B. Willey, Introduction to T. B.'s *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (London, 1965), pp. 5-9; P. Casini, *L'universo-macchina* (Bari, 1969), pp. 91-9; S. Kelly, s.v. 'B., T.', in DSB, III, pp. 612-14; Paolo Rossi, 'La "capricciosa rivoluzione" di T. B.', in *Studi in onore di Antonio Corsano* (Manduria, 1970), pp. 653-69; W. A. Lookwood, 'Political Millenarism and B.'s Sacred Theory', *Science Studies*, II (1972), pp. 265-79; Willey, pp. 329-36; Gliozzi, *Adamo e il nuovo mondo: La nascita dell'antropologia come ideologia coloniale: dalle genealogie bibliche alle teorie razziali (1550-1700)*, pp. 576-86; Rossi, *I segni del tempo: Storia della terra e storia delle nazioni da Hooke a Vico*, pp. 54-62, 77-8, 128, 133-5.

² As far as the influence of the *Archaeologia philosophica* is concerned, we should also mention the use Pasquale Galluppi made of the term "archaeology" in the *Storia della filosofia* that he planned to write and whose first part was in fact entitled *Archeologia filosofica*. Only that first part was published (Naples, 1842; 300 pp.), because of the author's death, and even that was incomplete and restricted to the "origin of the universe and man". It was missing the second part that should have discussed the "origin of science and the arts". Galluppi's *Archeologia* intended to carry out a preliminary historical study of all questions concerning the earliest philosophical endeavours, through the examination and rational analysis of ancient doctrines. The study of philosophical systems could not be started without first throwing some light on the origins of the universe, humanity and the elements, that had given rise to philosophical reflection (*Storia della filosofia*, Vol. I, 'Prefazione', pp. xvii-xix). Galluppi used the term 'archaeology' in a wider sense than that used by Burnet. Even though he did not explicitly accept the idea of an 'archaeological reconstruction' of philosophical systems, he did extend his study of the beginning to man and the products of his civilization. It is clear that Galluppi had given much thought to Vico's considerations.

On the reception of the *Archaeologia philosophica* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:

AE, 1693, pp. 272-80, 291-300; BUH, xxiv (1693), pp. 449-80; HOS, March 1693, pp. 391-409; *De Boekzaal van Europe*, July/August 1693, pp. 121-40; PhT, xvii (1693), no. 201, pp. 796-812; J. Graverol, *Moses vindicatus, sive asserta Historiae creationis mundi aliarumque quales a Mose narrantur veritas: adversus Cl. V. T. B. S. T. D. Archaeologias Philosophicas* (Amsterdam, 1694); F. Buddeus, 'Origines philosophiae mysticae sive Cabalae veterum Ebraeorum brevis delineatio', *Observationes selectae ad rem litterariam spectantes*, 1 (1700), pp. 1-25; F. Buddeus, 'Defensio Cabbalae Ebraeorum contra auctores quosdam modernos', *Observationes selectae ad rem litterariam spectantes*, 1 (1700), pp. 198-220; M. Leydekker, *De Republica Hebraeorum libri XII, quibus . . . antiquitates Judaeorum . . . ostenditur, historia V. T. exponitur fabulosae origines gentium, Aegyptiorum, Phoeniciorum, Arabum, Chaldaeorum, Graecorum et Romanorum referuntur. Subjicitur Archaeologia sacra, qua historia creationis et diluvii mosaica contra B. telluris theoriam asseritur* (Amsterdam, 1704); 'Nachricht von der Scriptoribus historiae philosophicae überhaupt', NB, 11 (1711), p. 386; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 298-341; F. Buddeus, *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum* (The Hague, 1720), pp. 345, 360-61, 365-7, 396-7; review of T. B., *De statu mortuorum et resurgentium: Accesserunt Epistolae duae circa Libellum de Archaeologiis philosophicis* (London, 1726) and id., *De fide et officiis christianorum* (London, 1727), AE, 1728, pp. 82-92 (esp. pp. 88-9); review of T. B., *De statu mortuorum et resurgentium: Accesserunt Epistolae duae circa Libellum de Archaeologiis philosophicis* (London, 1726), BA, xv (1727), pp. 222-42 (esp. pp. 240-42); F. Buddeus, *Compendium historiae philosophicae* (The Hague, 1731), pp. 389-90; Brucker, Vol. 1, pp. 232-4; IV, pp. 620-25; D. Diderot, s.v. 'Mosaïque et chrétienne, philosophie', in *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (3rd edn; Livourne, 1773) Vol. x, pp. 677-8; Buonafeide, *Della restaurazione*, Vol. 1, pp. 126-37; A. E. Waite, *The Holy Kabbalah* (London, 1928), pp. 482-5; U. Bonanate, *Charles Blount: Libertinismo e deismo nel Seicento inglese* (Florence, 1972), pp. 48-52, 54-6.

On the historiography of philosophy:

Tuveson, *Millenium and Utopia*, pp. 152-83; Braun, pp. 75-6; Malusa, 'Interpretazione', p. 127; Masi, *Eclettismo e storia della filosofia in Johann Franz Budde*, pp. 194-5.

PART II

THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY IN
GERMANY IN THE SECOND HALF OF
THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

GIUSEPPE MICHELI

CHAPTER 4

THE 'HISTORIA PHILOSOPHICA' IN GERMAN SCHOLASTIC THOUGHT

INTRODUCTION*

I. The historiographical work produced in Germany during this period can be regarded as the equivalent of the type of scholarship that was being produced in the Netherlands and in England, during the same period, through the efforts of scholarly erudition and classical philology. While the German counterparts to the works of Vossius, Hornius, and Stanley were of lesser stature, a more important stage was reached with the historical-philosophical work of Jakob Thomasius (the teacher of Leibniz) and with the more modest, yet still significant, contributions of Tribbechow, Witte, and Colberg. There were particular social and cultural factors in Germany, by comparison with England and the Low Countries, that resulted in this difference in their intellectual production. There was no philosophical background comparable to that represented elsewhere by Bacon and the Cambridge Platonists, Descartes and Franco-Dutch Cartesianism. Instead, a grey and lifeless 'school philosophy' had developed, which managed to lay claim, with a degree of prudent caution, to its own limited sphere of action alongside the dominant orthodox Lutheran theology, and which, having embraced a certain type of Aristotelianism, remained strikingly closed and unreceptive to, as well as suspicious of, the Western *novatores*.

The German tradition of polyhistory continued into the second half of the seventeenth century. Out of this tradition emerged a body of work such as that of Jonsius, characterized as it was by the presentation of a very full general survey of historical-philosophical literature (thus providing a collection of materials for a complete history of the historiography of philosophy), yet at the same time poor both in the way it was elaborated and in its

* by Giovanni Santinello.

classification and division — or even its degree of mastery — of its scholarly material. Jonsius's *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* was a genuine work of polyhistory, but learning and scholarship were also strongly evident in other works in which the philosophical interest was predominant, such as those of Scheffer, Tribbechow, and Thomasius himself.

Finally, in order to understand the historical-philosophical mind in Germany at this period, we should bear in mind the religious background of Lutheran orthodoxy. All the works we shall be considering emanated from Protestant Germany, chiefly from Saxony and the northern regions. Moreover, this intellectual production was linked — if in varying degrees and in different ways — to the academic world of the university schools, which exerted the whole imposing weight of their own didactic requirements and of tradition.

It is important to examine the philosophical situation of the time in depth. The dominant tradition was that embodied in what became known as the *Schulphilosophie* (cf. E. Weber, *Die philosophische Scholastik des deutschen Protestantismus im Zeitalter der Orthodoxie* (Leipzig, 1907); id., *Der Einfluß der protestantischen Schulphilosophie auf die orthodox-lutherische Dogmatik* (Leipzig, 1908)), or, in Wundt's felicitous expression, 'die Barockphilosophie' (Wundt, pp. 264–84). This tradition established itself as philosophy when it succeeded in regaining the ground it had lost during the violent anti-philosophical polemic conducted by Luther and Lutheran orthodoxy in the previous century. Beginning with Melancthon and gradually increasing towards the end of the sixteenth century, philosophy had reconquered one position after another in the Protestant universities. This same Lutheran theology felt itself to be philosophically and culturally defenceless in the face of the Catholic counter-offensive and the intellectual fearlessness and vigour of Calvinism — traditions which were both well-trained in using the weapons of rationality. So for Lutheran theology, too, Aristotelianism came to appear the most suitable philosophical system for upholding the truths of revelation on the level of natural reason. This acceptance and reappropriation of Aristotle happened gradually over a period of time. First to come were the more innocuous tools of the system, logic and rhetoric, followed by ethics — and finally, viewed with more suspicion and caution, physics and metaphysics (cf. W. Sparr, *Wiederkehr der Metaphysik: Die ontologische Frage in der lutherischen Theologie des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1976), esp. pp. 9–18).

However, the aversion to philosophy shown by theologians and ecclesiastical historians was by no means completely extinguished. There ensued a battle, waged by conservative forces faithful to the original spirit of the Reformation and to the polemic against medieval (which for them meant 'Papist') Aristotelianism. On the other hand, there were forces which were destined to bring about future innovation and renewal — we may think for

instance of the pietism which was to result, in part, from the crisis of the *Schulphilosophie* towards the end of the seventeenth century. We shall find some historians of philosophy, like Tribbechow and even, in certain respects, Jakob Thomasius himself, taking the side of an anti-philosophical polemic which had never been entirely calmed or appeased. The struggle carried on by Tribbechow against 'naturalism' — a category which carried particular theological significance for the Lutheran doctrine of the corruption of nature due to original sin — was manifested more particularly as an aversion to the natural force of reason as exercised in philosophy. It was philosophy as such that was infected by naturalism. The pagan naturalism of the Greeks had been a corrupting influence on philosophy, theology, and religion in medieval Scholasticism, the subject with which Tribbechow was especially concerned. This could be proved by the results of a historical enquiry into the origins and first flowering of scholastic philosophy, that is to say, in the period of Abelard, Peter Lombard, and the *Decretum Gratiani*. Here, then, was one of the chief motivations for the activity of the historian of philosophy, one of the aims which justified and stimulated his research. To some extent, as has already been suggested, Thomasius himself, while not sceptical about the usefulness of employing the natural forces of reason in the service of faith, nevertheless defined the primary task of the historian as that of disclosing the 'errors' of the philosophers — from the fundamental error of the doctrine of the dualism of God and matter that vitiated all the sects of Greek thought, to the corruption suffered by Aristotelian metaphysics when it was taken up by the Scholastics, and so on.

But the radical enemies of philosophy to be found in Germany in the later seventeenth century were few and far between. Instead, philosophy flourished peacefully in the universities in a sort of continuity re-established with the medieval tradition — a tradition which had indeed been profoundly affected and disrupted by the Reformation, but which had been successfully taken up again on a more modern basis. This was an Aristotelianism reformed in various ways through the appropriation of the different versions of it elaborated during the Renaissance in Italy and in France, and, above all, in the Counter-Reformation revival of Scholasticism in the Iberian peninsula (the so-called Second Scholastic). However, this reformed Aristotelianism was by no means the same in all the Protestant universities. The ontology of Suárez, for example, predominated to a great extent; but at Altdorf and Königsberg, under the leadership of Soner, Dreier, and others, a battle was being waged in favour of a pure form of Aristotelianism, taken directly from the ancient texts and Greek commentators without the mediating influence of the Aristotelian scholars of the Renaissance. The point of greatest disagreement lay in the understanding of the object and purpose of metaphysics. For the school of Altdorf, 'being as being' (*ens qua ens*) was God himself: according to them, Aristotle's view of metaphysics was that it

was a natural theology. This interpretation was shared by Thomasius (and, with him, Leibniz), who in this became followers of Soner and Dreier. Others, however — and they were the prevailing majority — were working out an ontology of 'being as being' conceived as a general metaphysics, of which the specialized (*specialis*) part was constituted by pneumatics (that is, doctrines relating to the science of God and finite spirits). This was the classification that was to remain predominant in German scholarship, beyond the crisis of baroque philosophy, up to the period of Wolffian rationalism, and was present even in the concept of metaphysics inherited by Kant (for whom, in the first *Critique*, ontology or general metaphysics corresponds to analytics, while special metaphysics corresponds to dialectic).

Aristotelianism, whether in its reformed or pure state, elicited a striking degree of tenacity and attachment to its own doctrines, resulting in a new kind of dogmatism that Thomasius was to judge to be even worse than that of the medieval scholastics. Petersen has collected together many opinions of the men of the subsequent generation (that is, the generation of Christian Thomasius), as an example of which we may cite the following view, expressed by F. Gentzken in his *Historia philosophica* (1724), of the intellectual ambience at Leipzig:

This excessive love for Aristotle's philosophy was the reason why the eclectic and free method (*eclectica et libera . . . ratio*) of studying philosophy, which is the only true way to reach a sound understanding (*ad solidam sapientiam*), was exiled from the world of scholarship for such a long time This used to be the formula of the oath at Leipzig: I . . . have promised . . . that I did not wish to teach what is foreign (*alienum*) to Aristotelian philosophy and to the accepted teaching (*doctrina recepta*), and I now repeat the same (Petersen, p. 120 n. 1).

Significantly, this attachment to Aristotle's teaching also implied a preoccupation with historical study, motivated by a similar interest in the clear identification and delineation of the true, authentic teaching of the master. The following passage from the statutes of the University of Wittenberg refers to the teaching of ethics:

The teacher of morals, whoever he may be, shall explain the Greek Ethics of Aristotle word by word (*ad verbum*), but he shall distinguish carefully (*diligenter discernet*) between the different kinds of teachings (*genera doctrinarum*): Divine law, the Gospel, political and religious precepts relating to everyday life; he shall distinguish (*di-iudicabit*) between the sects of the philosophers and illustrate their precepts by examples (Petersen, p. 170).

The interest in studying philosophy from a historical point of view is rooted in this act of "distinguishing between the sects of the philosophers" — an act

in which we may see, to some extent, the implantation of the history of philosophy into the scholastic programmes of university courses.

Thus the emergence of historical treatises was motivated not only by a preoccupation with polyhistory but also by an interest in matters of philosophy and religion — an interest which was very much alive in the Aristotelianism of the Protestant universities. The term 'sects' was a legacy inherited from Diogenes Laertius and, more recently, from the patristic and humanist traditions. It often carried a negative connotation, owing to the problematic relationship obtaining between philosophy and theology, and between the history of philosophy and the history of the Church (as we have already seen). However, it also resulted in a particular commitment and attention being given to the verification of historical truth: ascertaining the authentic doctrines upheld by the philosophers was the primary task of the historian of philosophy, and for this reason his work rendered service not only to history but also to philosophical and religious truth. For example: Aristotle's thought is shown to be in need of reform, and, taken in its historical reality (that is, as it was first expressed by its author), cannot be reconciled with the truth of Christianity; in the attempt to bring about such a reconciliation, medieval scholars had corrupted not only religion but even Aristotelian philosophy itself by falsifying its historical truth. The same could be said of the various concordist attitudes and positions worked out among the humanists. Therefore an attempt should be made to grasp the true significance of the philosophies of Plato, of the Stoics, or of Epicurus, as they existed beyond the mutilations and distortions carried out in the name of concordism.

The diligence and commitment of these historians who worked in the university schools nearly always resulted in an overall picture of the historical development of philosophy in which the Middle Ages were seen as a period of decadence, while the Protestant Reformation and humanism together marked the beginning of a new age, with the rebirth of scholarship, literature, and the sciences. That is not to say, however, that their obviously positive appreciation of religious reform always went hand-in-hand with an equal appreciation of philosophical reform and a positive assessment of contemporary *novatores*. On the contrary, many German Aristotelians viewed the *novatores* with considerable suspicion and aversion, regarding them as people who rejected Aristotle and set off along new paths, even to the extent of founding new sects and so reviving the sectarian divisions of antiquity. The German historians of philosophy of this period — Jakob Thomasius being a characteristic example — were faced with a choice between sectarianism and concordism. They rejected both positions, but could not point to a third way capable of resolving the dilemma posed by these two alternatives, except by suggesting some vague reform of Aristotelian thought. Only from the school of Thomasius would come the proposal of

a "conciliation between ancients and moderns" that was not concordist. This was the so-called eclecticism, as his contemporaries and the historians of the eighteenth century, chief among them Brucker, were to describe the thought of Leibniz — a discreditable name for a philosophy as original as his. But the term 'eclectic' had already been in circulation for a century or so, being used to describe an aspiration that had not yet been realized. About a century earlier Justus Lipsius, though himself a 'sectarian', had written as follows (addressing himself to Potamon of Alexandria, the presumed founder of the 'eclectic faction' or *secta electiva*):

Come, O come, first among philosophers, you have indeed set out on the way that leads to the heart of truth (*viam . . . ad penetrabilia illa veri*) . . . Too late your ideas have been discovered and made public, which should have been done from the beginning. He who reads attentively a variety of books and authors, and then chooses with discernment (*cum iudicio selegit*), is the one who will without any difficulty become the consort of truth, free from any sectarianism (*ne . . . factionis expers*) (*Manuductionis ad stoicam philosophiam libri tres* (Antwerp, 1604), diss. 5, p. 12).

Leibniz made use of this eclecticism precisely when he was forming his views and opinions on the historical experience of philosophy. He did not himself write one of the general histories that concern us here, but left a quantity of sketches and scattered remarks, which it is important to notice. We shall therefore examine these observations here, since it is evident that Leibniz must be regarded as a figure of the highest importance in the transition between the Aristotelianism of the *Schulphilosophie*, a tradition he himself turned against, and the Enlightenment philosophy of the following century.

II. We shall examine Leibniz's intellectual training in the school of Jakob Thomasius and his opinions concerning his teacher's historical work in the section devoted to Thomasius himself. But it was precisely his experience with such a master that provided Leibniz with his acute sensitivity to the historical past of philosophy and to the delicate relationship between that past and the present. This sensitivity is evident in countless passages in his work, being expressed in many places where he discusses the ideas of ancient and medieval writers. However, we shall here be referring to one piece of writing in particular, where Leibniz left a very few pages containing the outline of a work which can legitimately be called a general history of philosophy.

This piece of writing is a youthful work, one of Leibniz's many unpublished papers and juvenilia that were studied by Gerhardt, together with other fragments, under the collective title of *Scientia generalis-Characteristica*. It is preceded by a kind of preface under the heading (which then serves as

the title for the whole essay) *Initia et specimina scientiae generalis sive de instauratione et augmentis scientiarum in publicam felicitatem* (in *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. C. J. Gerhardt, Vol. VII, pp. 124–56). In this text, which is dated around 1680, Leibniz put forward his cherished programme of a *scientia generalis*, by means of which, whenever it was wished to resolve a dispute, it would not be necessary to conduct such noisy arguments, “but each would be able to say to the other: let us work it out” (*sed alter alteri dicere possit: calculemus*; p. 125). To reach such a stage — and this was the only way in which learning could bring about general public happiness — it was necessary to have open-mindedness, breadth of vision, a sense of history, and the ability to make a broad synthesis of all the best things which humanity had produced over the course of time. The *novatores* of the present century were sectarians, because they pretended that they alone had made great discoveries. Instead, sects should all be eradicated, as had always been done in mathematics, so that among mathematicians there was no sense in calling oneself a Euclidean or an Archimedean or an Apollonian. Modern scholars were better at physics, where experimentation and mathematics were necessary, but the ancients towered above them in metaphysics and politics. Leibniz thought it was essential not to give one’s attention solely to the study of physics and mathematics, thereby neglecting the study of the historical and philosophical disciplines (*historias, antiquitates, res metaphysicas*), just as it was necessary to combine knowledge (*scientia*) and devotion (*pietas*).

This, then, was the programme of Leibniz’s eclecticism, as outlined in a text which was implicitly a debate, or an interior dialogue, with the ideas of Descartes. There are some people, he wrote, who, with the excuse that cities “built in a single burst of energy appear more elegant than those which have grown gradually over a period of time”, want to persuade us to overthrow the old edifice of the sciences from its very foundations, “having destroyed all those things that they call prejudices”, and to reconstruct “a new work (*novum opus*)”. Leibniz, on the other hand, certain as he was of human weakness and of the difficulty that one person on his own would encounter in such an enterprise, would rather wish “that the efforts of all the centuries and all peoples should be joined into one”; that whatever good things have been discovered before our time should be put together, as in a public treasury, not neglecting the contribution of anyone in our own day who might help us with his understanding, his work, or his wealth. In fact, I am convinced that a large proportion of the ideas handed down to us by the ancients and generally accepted, are in reality true and just, provided that “they find a suitable interpreter and not a pedantic quibbler (*idoneum interpretem, nec argutum cavillatorem nanciscantur*)”. And since we have no reliable way of demonstrating with certainty what it is the proper function of future time to accomplish (namely, the unmasking and banishment of false ideas), to wish to destroy all of what are today assumed to be mere opinions, on the

pretext of clearing the way for a more certain knowledge, would be like wanting to overthrow the state in its entirety simply in order to instal a better form of government (pp. 130–31).

Within the scope of such ideas, which had their basis in his cherished *scientia generalis*, Leibniz gave an outline, expressed in a few pages (pp. 146–53), of a ‘general history’ of ancient philosophy. In philosophy, as in mathematics and poetry, the ancients have passed down to us true and just things which are to be conserved, brought together and kept in the public treasury. So Leibniz made himself into a historian of philosophy, in the spirit (as he said) of a suitable and sympathetic interpreter, not as a pedantic historian.

He did not structure his brief account around the presentation of the affiliation of the sects, arranged in dependent ‘families’, as had generally been done up to that time (following the tradition of Diogenes Laertius). Instead, he structured it as a sequence of the great intellectual figures or of the various currents of philosophical thought: atomism, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics. Epicurus is barely mentioned. He began not with Thales, as was traditional, but with the Phoenician Moschus, presumed to be the “inventor of atomism (*autor atomorum*)”, or rather of that philosophy that “explains the phenomena of nature by the movement of the imperceptible particles of matter (*imperceptibilium materiae partium*)”. He then went on to discuss Leucippus and his theory of the origin of the earth and the vortices, from which he deduced “[the theory of] gravity mechanically, so that one is amazed that, confronted with so much light, Aristotle should have preferred to remain blind”. And finally he came to Democritus, whose experiments had been mentioned by Vitruvius. Among Democritus’ theories Leibniz called attention at least to the one that distinguished the natural properties of things (shape and motion) from the conventional ones, as his contemporaries were teaching. Unfortunately, however, Democritus’ texts had been lost: “those writings perished because they were not made for the taste of the common people who prefer easy trifles (*nugae faciles*)” (p. 146). And “absurdities” (*ineptiae*) was a phrase that exactly described the theory of “weight ascribed to atoms (*gravitas atomorum*)” and the theory of “oblique falling motion (*declinatio*)” — ideas attributable to Epicurus, not to Democritus.

There is no need to emphasize the fact of this placement of atomism at the beginnings of Greek thought, nor to underline the significance of such a placing both for Leibniz’s exposition of it and for the appraisal of his own thought, which may here be seen to locate itself within the wider context of the reception of atomism in the seventeenth century. He then went on to discuss Pythagoras, speaking almost exclusively of the political value of his philosophy: “his maxims had the purpose of improving the state” (*tendebant consilia ad emendandam rempublicam*); only towards the end did he mention

arithmetic, geometry, and music. But he made it clear that the theories of physics devised by Timaeus of Locris and Ocellus of Lucania could not and should not be traced back to Pythagoras. Nor, indeed, should the cosmological theory — the *systema mundi* — first elaborated by Aristarchus of Samos and not despised by the great Archimedes, and now happily resurrected by Nicholas Copernicus on the shores of the Baltic.

Plato should be studied from his own writings, "not from Plotinus or Marsilio Ficino, who, desiring all the time to say marvellous and mystical things, corrupted the teaching of this great man" (p. 147). Leibniz began in precisely this way, arguing strongly against the "later Platonists" (*Platonici posteriores*) and searching out Plato's independent and original teaching. This teaching was made up of learned and solid ideas on the following subjects: "on the virtues and on justice, on the [theory of the] state, on the art of definition and classification, on the knowledge of eternal truths, on the innate ideas (*notitiis innatis*) of our mind" (p. 148). But there was also a more extreme hyperbolic and poetic side of Plato's genius that had prompted him to write also on such topics as the world soul (*anima mundi*), the world of the Ideas, the purgation of souls, and the cave of shadows and images (in the *Republic*). And many later writers — among them Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Philostratus, Proclus, and other Pythagoreans and Platonists of those times — had joined in eagerly with the discussion of these subjects, hoping thereby to earn people's respect and to compete with the Christians with whom they were in conflict.

But why, wondered Leibniz, had no-one up to the present given us a "system of Platonic philosophy"? He recalled the figure of Francesco Patrizi, but even Patrizi appeared to him to have been corrupted by his previous reading of the "pseudo-Platonists". So at this point, it seems to me, Leibniz tried to work out the system for himself. These, he says, are the most important elements in Plato's thought, elements which he then proceeds to organize into an arrangement of systematic interdependence: first, that the mind is a substance which is self-moving, that is to say, "free to move itself (*liberam ac sese excitantem*), or rather, the principle of its own action" (this seems like the beginnings of a youthful version of Leibniz's system of monadology!); second, that matter is by contrast inert and indefinite, and is more apparent than real; third, that many properties of physical bodies, as Democritus said, such as heat, cold, and colour, are attributes due to appearance (*phaenomena*) rather than true qualities (*verae qualitates*). For this reason, thought (*cogitatio*) should free itself from confused ideas so as to seek pure ones; science is concerned with eternal things, and universal or eternal essences have more reality than particular entities, which are enveloped and caught up in the flux of matter and chaos. The senses always lead the mind astray: instead, the mind should remove itself from the contamination of the body and perfect itself in knowledge of eternal truths. There are innate ideas

within the mind, and for this reason 'knowledge' is 'remembrance', and human perfection consists in participating in divine perfection. Leibniz concluded:

All these things are indeed absolutely true, if you interpret them correctly, and of great usefulness (*usus maximi*); I do not know of any philosopher who had more accurate notions (*rectius senserit*) concerning incorporeal substances than Plato, so it is to be regretted that such lofty and true teachings (*tam excelsa, tam recta dogmata*) should have lain for so long enshrouded and buried in certain other trivial ideas (pp. 148-9).

Leibniz then turned to Aristotle, whose teaching, he said, was known to all: rather than recount or expound it, it would be better to give some opinions about it. At first Aristotle had appeared to be an enemy of the faith; he was then welcomed and revered as its only defender: not only Averroës but also St Thomas Aquinas had considered him to be a prodigy of human intelligence. Today in the universities he was ridiculed. At this point Leibniz gave a comprehensive, balanced, and conciliatory assessment of his debt to Aristotle, which contains several personal touches and is interesting to read in full:

I shall now say what I think about it. From the years when I first began to study, I drank in the Peripatetic way of teaching, and as an adult I studied Aristotle by no means superficially (*non perfunctorie inspexi*), yet from my childhood I exercised my liberty of thought (*libertatem sentiendi exercui*), and later took pleasure in the mathematical and experimental sciences. Subsequently, having lived outside the academic world and having led a completely different sort of life, I am no longer among those whose authority is put at risk by that of Aristotle (*in Aristotele periclitatur*), but neither can I be numbered among those who do not know the ideas of the ancient philosophers and the teachings accepted in the universities, and who deride them in order to hide their own culpable ignorance (p. 149).

And so, in conclusion, Leibniz agreed with Cicero and Aquinas in praising Aristotle. In ethics he gave us fine things, useful for life and for jurisprudence even if they are not as sublime and close to Christian teaching as certain ideas of Plato and Epictetus. Morality is the daughter of metaphysics: it is not possible for anyone to have the highest level of morality if he "does not have also the highest thoughts (*optime sentit*) about the providence of God and the immortality of the soul". Leibniz thought Aristotle to be supreme in politics and rhetoric, but drew a clear distinction in the matter of logic. Although Aristotle had laid the most solid foundations concerning forms of expression and syllogisms, he did not put forward clear ideas for the art of "invention and demonstration" (*inveniendi et demonstrandi*), as can be seen from the *Posterior Analytics*, where no example is given "of that extreme

power of demonstration (*potissimae demonstrationis*), which is so highly praised". Leibniz also thought it necessary to make a distinction in physics. In Aristotle's general science of physics (comprising the eight books of the *Physics*) there were, as a rule, good ideas: the doctrine of forms had some validity, even if today it was sometimes condemned; but what was particularly valuable was Aristotle's teaching concerning the infinite division of the continuum, as opposed to that based on the theory of atoms and the void. He thought, on the other hand, that the *physica media* had very little importance (as for example *De generatione et corruptione*, *De caelo*, the *Meteorology*, and *De sensu et sensibus*). There followed a list of those theories of Aristotle's which had been superseded by the physics of Leibniz's time. In *De anima*, he said, there was more subtlety than clarity and truth. "And that famous theory of the active intellect (*intellectus agentis dogma*) is rightly regarded with suspicion, as if it meant that Aristotle recognized as immortal only the mind common to all men, and as mortal, on the contrary, the soul of the individual". But there were, after all, good things in the *physica specialis* (*De generatione animalium*, *De partibus animalium*) — things that Harvey himself had valued (pp. 149–51).

The Stoics appeared last. It seemed that their concept of fate was identical with that of Divine Providence. Leibniz, however, confessed that he found himself incapable of judging their thoughts accurately, and that he would therefore adopt the most favourable interpretation of them. Stoic ethics, on the other hand, were undoubtedly something great, worthy to be resurrected by the thinkers of the present time. Leibniz found that in their adherence to the principle by which life was to be lived according to reason, the Stoics were not all that far from the Epicureans — just as, paradoxically, their teaching, which proposed the dissolution of individual souls in order to uphold the idea of a useless collective immortality, was not far from the doctrine of the Epicureans that, while not denying the existence of the gods, rendered them useless for the task of ruling the world. Instead, for a happy life, it was necessary to be convinced that God ruled the world and that the individual soul was immortal, as the Roman Stoics Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and Seneca seemed to have been inclined to believe.

This survey of ancient thought gives a picture that may be integrated — in such a way as to form a complete history of philosophy — with the assessments of medieval and Renaissance thought to be found in Leibniz's 'Dissertatio praeliminaris' written for his 1670 edition of Nizolio's *De veris principiis* (in *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. IV, pp. 131–62). The preface to this edition has indeed already been studied for this purpose (see Del Torre, pp. 56–62), and it has furthermore been pointed out that it contains the best appraisal of medieval thought furnished by any seventeenth-century historian (A. Corsano, review of V. Mathieu, *Introduzione a Leibniz* (Bari, 1976), in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, 11

(1978), p. 260). Among Nizolio's errors Leibniz included the abuse (*maledicentia*) which he had directed, among others, "at all the Scholastics, without distinction — for, even when he wanted to treat Thomas Aquinas very gently (*mollissime*), he called him 'a one-eyed man among the blind', [in] Bk. 4, ch. 7". In addition, Leibniz identified numerous errors made by the Scholastics that others, like Nizolio, had incautiously attributed to Aristotle himself. But he declined to make a general rule out of every instance. On the contrary, to the detractors of Aristotle and of the medieval thinkers Leibniz addressed an appeal that has all the flavour of an appeal to the historical sense:

Since there was very little civil history and philosophical history, and the best writers could be read only in very bad translations, and since, lacking the benefits of [the art of] printing, their works had to be copied out at very great expense or else with immense effort (*aut sumptuosissime . . . aut molestissime*), . . . it was no wonder that learning frequently sank to a very low level, and it has to be considered a miracle that true philosophy was held in some esteem, even though very slight (pp. 156–7).

Leibniz differed from those historians of his time who often gave a brief and dismissive assessment of medieval thought (such as Tribbechow and even Jakob Thomasius himself), not only in his avoidance of hasty and injudicious condemnations but also in such positive — and remarkably discriminating — judgements as his interpretation of Nominalism: "The school of the Nominalists (*Secta Nominalium*) is one of the most profound among the Scholastics, and it corresponds very closely (*congruentissima*) to the reformed method of philosophy today" (p. 157). He traced its origin to "a certain Roscellinus of Britain", but it had been revived with much glory by Ockham and had numbered among its exponents Gregory of Rimini, Gabriel Biel, and many of the Augustinian order — including to begin with Luther himself, before he turned against all monks of whatever order. Leibniz appreciated two things in the teaching of the Nominalists: one general rule (*regula*), that the number of essential concepts was not to be increased unless there was a compelling need to do so (*entia non esse multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*), and one principle, that among hypotheses the simpler shall be considered the better (*hypothesin eo esse meliorem, quo simpliciore*). Leibniz also appreciated both the assertion that every substantial being is always and only singular, and the Nominalists' approach to explanatory method:

The nature of things can be fully explained (*omnia in rerum natura explicari posse*), even if universal and proper formal categories are wholly lacking (*universalibus et formalitatibus realibus prorsus careatur*): I [sc. Leibniz] consider that there is nothing more true than this assertion, nothing more worthy of acceptance by a philosopher living

in these days, to the extent that I believe that even Ockham himself was no more of a Nominalist than Thomas Hobbes is today — and Hobbes, to tell the truth, seems to me to be indeed something more than a Nominalist (p. 158).

At this point, however, Leibniz went on to argue against Hobbes to the extent that the latter had reduced to the status of mere names not only the universals but also the essential truth of things, and had upheld the theory of the arbitrary character of truth, depending as it did on the conventional nature of terminological definition. A profound doctrine, said Leibniz, but one that did not stand up to examination.

Lastly, in this preface to Nizolio's work, there is a long section on the history of Renaissance thought, which is especially notable for an outline plan of the succession of Renaissance thinkers, and which can justifiably be described as an attempt to sketch out a possible scheme of periodization for the whole era. Outstanding at the beginning is the dominant figure of Valla, with his philological polemic against the Scholastics. But before him came Dante, who "as it were recalled a finer kind of literature (*meliores litteras*) from the underworld" (an allusion to *Purg.* i.7), and Petrarch (described as a disciple of Dante), followed by Filelfo, Poggio Bracciolini, and Leonardo Bruni. This was the first phase of humanism. Then came the Greeks, who provided help with both philosophy and eloquence (Theodore Gaza, George Trebizond, Manuel Chrysoloras, Cardinal Bessarion), followed by the Platonists and Aristotelians who had been taught by them: Giovanni Pico, Ermolao Barbaro, Nicolò Leonicensio, Marsilio Ficino. By then the antischolastic attitude of the humanists had spread throughout Europe: Politian, Gianfrancesco Pico, Rudolph Agricola, Johannes Reuchlin, Adriaan of Utrecht, Erasmus, Paolo Cortese, Vives, Melanchthon, Joachim Camerarius (pp. 151-2). At this point the list of names becomes even more copious and includes precise references to specific works that illustrate the rebirth of culture and philosophy, which Leibniz contrasted with the barbarism of the age of Scholasticism. Despite the positive acknowledgment Leibniz accorded to certain aspects of medieval thought (of which we have seen several examples), he did not manage to avoid the temptation of making out of an invented book with the polemical title *Anti-barbari* (Against the barbarians) an emblem of the whole of Renaissance civilization in its attitude towards the Middle Ages (pp. 152-3).

But what is the practical aim and application (*usus*) of the history of philosophy? What usefulness of purpose did Leibniz see in it? Returning to the fragment on the *scientia generalis*, we shall find at the end the following conclusion, which is pedagogical in character and seems to prepare the way for the scholastic texts on the history of philosophy of the following era:

I consider that it is not very wise for a young man not yet instructed in the art of demonstrating the higher doctrines (*sententiarum*

optimarum demonstrationibus) to dip indiscriminately into the books of the ancient philosophers. I would rather that some expert philosopher should compile a short overview (*breviarium*) of ancient philosophy that could serve as an introduction to the study of these philosophers and would include only the best and truest ideas, complete with their proofs (*optima atque verissima suis rationibus munita*) (p. 153).

Leibniz is here referring to the idea of a pedagogical manual intended to serve as a straightforward introduction to the subject. We should, however, note two things: first, that it does not exclude the reading of the ancient philosophers and the direct knowledge of their thought, but serves to introduce them; second, that it was to be compiled by a true philosopher, not simply by a learned philologist — and furthermore that, being a philosopher, he would not, in his choice of sayings from the ancients, simply collect them together, juxtaposed in a certain order, but would connect the various thoughts and ideas and give proper explanations of them. It was to be a thoughtfully compiled manual, clearly laid out and carefully reasoned. However, this is not saying a great deal by comparison with the acute intelligence and discernment of the opinions expressed by the young Leibniz in his short history of philosophy. This state of affairs was due chiefly to the pedagogical functions which the historical approach to philosophy was expected to fulfil in the German university schools, both at that time and subsequently. Leibniz's practical sense and the prudent intelligence with which he developed his ideas, imbued with a consistent respect for the received traditions, accord very well with the acuteness and, at times, the boldness of the judgments expressed in his appraisal of the past. The methodology used is wholly appropriate and adapted to the problem that Leibniz had inherited from his teachers, a position that neither accepts sectarianism nor entails a generalized, and hence distorting, concordism. Thus it is the idea of an eclectic philosophy that inspires both Leibniz's historical relationship to ancient thought, and the method he would wish to see used in a manual of the history of philosophy, within the scope of his cherished project of a *scientia generalis*.

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On Leibniz as a historian:

J. Jasper, *Leibniz und die Scholastik: Eine historisch-kritische Abhandlung* (Münster i. W., 1898-9); L. Davillé, *Leibniz historien* (Paris, 1909); W. Conze, *Leibniz als Historiker* (Berlin, 1951); L. W. Spitz, 'The Significance of Leibniz for Historiography', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XIII (1952), pp. 333-48; I. Quiles, 'Contribución a la historiografía de la escolástica medieval de los siglos XVII y XVIII', in *L'homme et son destin* (Louvain and Paris, 1960), pp. 729-41; W. Voisé, 'Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz ou l'historiographie d'un conciliateur', in *Discordia concors: Festgabe für E. Bonjour* (Basle and Stuttgart, 1968), pp. 121-30; G. Scheel, 'Leibniz historien', in *Aspects de l'homme et de l'œuvre*, Journées Leibniz organisées au Centre international de Synthèse (Paris, 1968), pp. 45-60; V. Mathieu, 'Leibniz e la filosofia perenne', in *La cultura del secolo XVII nel mondo di lingua italiana e di lingua tedesca*, Istituto culturale italo-tedesco (Merano, 1970), Vol. II, pp. 103-20; A. Corsano, *Bayle, Leibniz e la storia* (Naples, 1972); S. Bertelli, *Ribelli, libertini e ortodossi nella storiografia barocca* (Florence, 1973), pp. 353-6; G. Scheel, 'Leibniz und die deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft', in K. Hammer and J. Voss (eds.), *Historische Forschung im 18. Jahrhundert* (Bonn, 1976), pp. 82-101; A. Corsano, review of: V. Mathieu, *Introduzione a Leibniz* (Bari, 1976), in *GCFI*, II (1978), p. 260; S. Brown,

'Leibniz: Modern, Scholastic or Renaissance Philosopher?', in T. Sorell (ed.), *The Rise of Modern Philosophy: The Tension between the New and the Traditional Philosophies from Machiavelli to Leibniz* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 213–30.

1. JOHANNES JONSIUS (1624–1659)
De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae

1.1. Johannes Jonsius (Joensen) was born at Rendsburg in Holstein on 2 October 1624. He studied at Rostock, where he was awarded a doctorate in 1647, and in the following year he became an assistant lecturer (*Adjunct*) in the faculty of philosophy. He left Rostock in 1649 to take up the post of master-in-charge of the school in the town where he was born. In 1650 he moved to Königsberg and for some time conducted private classes in the University there. In 1652 he returned to Rendsburg to take up the position of Rector. Four years later, in 1656, he went to Schleswig, where he became Rector of the local diocesan school; in the following year, however, he gave up the post for reasons of health and transferred to Frankfurt am Main, where he held the post of Deputy Rector of the local school. He died in the same city two years later, in April 1659, after a painful illness, at the very moment when his book *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* was on the point of being published. Feeling the approach of death, he wrote in his dedication to the notables of the city of Frankfurt:

at this moment when my strength is almost exhausted by nine days and nights of continuous haemorrhaging, brought on by a scorbutic fever and by the fermentation of all the mass of blood of my body, which no treatment has had the power to staunch, so that I now find myself in the presence of death, I must add this also: take care of my wife who is a stranger in these lands, that she may know your kindness, such as you have showed to me in my lifetime.

1.2. Jonsius' writings show his particular interest in historical and scholarly subjects. His extant works include the following dissertations: *Discursus philologicus de vocis 'akrides' significatione* (Königsberg, 1651; 2nd edn, Hamburg, 1653); *Disputatio de syllogismo ex mente Aristotelis* (Königsberg, 1651; 2nd edn, Hamburg, 1653); *Dissertationum de historia peripatetica prima partis primae in qua recensetur qui Aristotelii fuerint ὁμόνομοι et unde eius secta peripatetica sit appellata indicatur* (Hamburg, 1652), repr. in J. H. von Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis in scholis protestantium fortuna schediasma* (Wittenberg, 1720) which contains, in addition to Jonsius's dissertation, the *De varia Aristotelis in Academia Parisiensis fortuna* by Jean de Launoy; *Epistula ad Gaudium, de Sparti, socii aliisque nonnullis* (Jena, 1655), repr. in J. G. Graevae (Graevius), *Syntagma variarum dissertationum variorum* (Utrecht, 1702). His main work, entitled *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae libri IV*, was published in 1659 at Frankfurt by T. M. Götz; it was reprinted with corrections and important additions by J. C. Dorn (Dornius) at Jena in 1716 with the following title: *De*

scriptoribus historiae philosophicae libri IV, nunc denuo recogniti atque ad praesentem aetatem usque perducti cura Io. Christophori Dornii cum praefatione Burcardi Gotthelfii Struvii; this is published in facsimile, ed. L. Geldsetzer (Düsseldorf, 1968).

1.3. In the Frankfurt edition of 1659 *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* contains 352 pages of text, plus the indexes. In the Jena edition of 1716, edited by Dornius (which is the edition referred to here), the work is divided into two parts: the first, comprising Bks. I and II, contains 256 pages; the second, comprising Bk. III (with Dorn's additions) and the much shorter Bk. IV, contains 272 pages (the part for which Dornius was responsible is printed on pp. 106–230). The first three books are subdivided into chapters, and the chapters into paragraphs. Bk. IV (which has only 44 pages) deals with historians of philosophy "of unknown or uncertain period (*incognitae aetatis*)", and is not subdivided into chapters but only into paragraphs. Both editions include Jonsius' dedication to the notables of the city of Frankfurt (mentioned above) and his preface to the reader. In the 1716 edition these are preceded by two prefatory texts, these being, firstly, Dornius' dedication to Buddeus, and secondly, an important introduction by the well-known scholar and bibliographer Burkhard Gotthelf Struve (Struvius), containing a survey of the progress achieved during the modern period in the different countries of Europe in the field of the historiography of philosophy. This is followed by an 'Index auctorum et rerum' (which is accurate for the most part, though it contains some printer's errors) totalling 63 unnumbered pages, and by Dornius' corrections to Jonsius' text (8 unnumbered pages). Each chapter is headed by a brief summary. Both the titles of the works discussed and the numerous quotations are printed in italics within the text; for Greek authors the text is given in Greek, often (but not always) followed by a Latin translation. Bibliographical references are always very precise and are given within the text. There are few footnotes.

1.4. The first two chapters of Bk. I of *De scriptoribus* are devoted to problems of method, and in this (as Mario dal Pra has observed) Jonsius displayed a remarkable degree of critical understanding. In the first chapter he took the trouble to define with particular rigour the significance of the expression 'history of philosophy', and in the second he examined the most common difficulties faced by the historian of ancient thought.

For Jonsius the expression *historia philosophica* had a double significance: "*historia philosophica* means either the history of any kind of philosophical knowledge (*alicuius scientiae philosophicae*) or else the history of the lives, of the books, and so on, of the philosophers" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. I, p. 2). Jonsius traced the first of these definitions to the Aristotelian distinction between history and science:

as to the first of these two meanings, it is well known that the foundation of all science is history — namely, the observations, examples and experience out of which science formulates its general propositions (*universales suas propositiones format*) as from individual items of data. History says *quod sit* ('what is'); science and philosophy *cur sit* ('how and why it is so'). The former considers the particular, the latter the universal; the former depends on [the evidence of] the

senses, the latter on reason; the former precedes, the latter follows (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 2).

Hence every science presupposes its own particular history — that is to say, the experiences, the examples, the data based on observation which are its starting point and foundation: “therefore, however many philosophies and sciences there are, there must be exactly the same number of histories on which they are based” (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 2). It is convenient to distinguish the historical aspect of each science — consisting in the careful collection of data based on experience — from the philosophical aspect, which is the search for causes and the definition of essences:

the philosopher of the physical world (*physicus philosophus*) has his own natural history, that is, [his] observations of the sky, the stars, the comets, the rainbow, the lightning, the sea, the winds, the metals, the animals, the plants, from which he learns that natural things exist in such and such a way (*e quibus cognoscit, quod res naturales se ita habeant*); thus, by considering individual things carefully and comparing them one with another, he observes their differences, and he searches out and demonstrates how and why things exist in the way they do (*rationem et causam, cur ita se habeant, investigat et docet*); the latter is rightly the task of philosophers of the physical world, while the former belongs to natural historians (*physici historici*). . . . Mathematicians too have their ‘histories’ and their geometrical, astrological, chronological, and geographical observations; nor are histories lacking in the philosophy or science of politics, which, in the doctrine of human customs (*doctrina de moribus*) explains the nature of justice, fortitude, and temperance, by learning from the many examples of just, strong, and temperate men; and in its doctrine of the political state it carefully observes the forms of various states and their institutions, their rise and fall, in order to find why this state organized in a certain way turns out thus and that state turns out otherwise; and only after doing this is it able to give others useful suggestions, based on solid reasons, on the best way to organize government (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 2–3).

Examples of this kind of history, consisting in the careful collection of particular examples and detailed observations on which to base subsequent research into causes and the definition of essences, were given by Aristotle, who “wrote a history of the animals and plants, just as he is believed to have left also a history of the various political states” (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 3).

Jonsius, however, did not intend to base his investigations on this meaning of the term *historia philosophica* (which is certainly its primary and most important meaning) but rather on the second, which referred, as we have seen, to “the history of the lives and writings of the philosophers” (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 3). Yet in this second case the notion of history,

consonant with Aristotelian teaching, still signified knowledge of the particular. The *historia philosophica* in its first meaning was divided, "in accordance with the various sciences and philosophies" (*iuxta scientias et philosophias*), into "theological, physical, astronomical, geometrical, ethical, [and] political history", and so on; and in its second meaning, with which Jonsius was primarily concerned, it could similarly be divided — by analogy with the first, but this time "according to the different philosophers" (*iuxta philosophos*) — into "Democritean", "Pythagorean", and "Aristotelian" — or else, "speaking generally and universally", it could signify that "history of philosophy that deals with the writings of the philosophers, with their teachings (*decretis*), followers (*successionibus*), sects, reception (*fortuna*), method of teaching, and so forth" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 3). While among the ancients there were some, such as Cornelius Nepos or Plutarch, who made a distinction between narrating the lives of illustrious men and the writing of history, Jonsius made it clear that he took the term 'history' in a wider sense, a sense more faithful to the Aristotelian conception, according to which it was entrusted with the understanding of the particular as such, "and [so] we judge that their lives are [the stuff of] history and that the writers of lives are rightly to be counted among the historians" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 4).

Jonsius himself had planned to write a *historia peripatetica*, which, however, he was not able to bring to fulfilment. Only the preface survives, containing the overall plan and the opening paragraphs of the first part of the work. In his outline Jonsius stated his intention to follow the example of Gassendi and other contemporary historians of the ancient sects (*De historia peripatetica*, p. 401, quoting from the edition by von Elswich) in dividing his work into three parts. The first part would set out the life, character, and accomplishments of Aristotle (*Aristotelis vita, mors, vitia, virtutes et diligentia*); in the second he would deal with Aristotle's predecessors, followers, and opponents (*antecessores eius, eorumque sententiae ex ipso, successores item et adversarii*); and in the third he would expound the Aristotelian writings, examining their authenticity and their reception, both as individual works and as a corpus of texts (*de libris eius, cum in genere, tum in specie de genuinis, spuriiis, deperditis et mutilis*) (*De historia peripatetica*, pp. 401–2). Apart from the preface, Jonsius wrote only three short paragraphs of his work, which contain respectively a list assembling all the sobriquets of Aristotle (*De historia peripatetica*, pp. 402–17), a consideration of the name given to the Peripatetic school (*De historia peripatetica*, pp. 417–19), and an examination of the opinions of the ancients concerning the origin of this name (*De historia peripatetica*, pp. 419–25). Nevertheless, the text serves to clarify what Jonsius understood by the *historia philosophica iuxta philosophos*.

Having made clear which meaning of *historia philosophica* he intended to follow, Jonsius then turned (still in the first chapter of *De scriptoribus*) to

a consideration of the idea of the philosopher and how it should be understood, "so that there may be no misunderstanding about which philosophers' lives we have decided to write". His solution to this question was to examine the three different meanings that the term 'philosopher' had had for Aristotle. According to the first and most comprehensive of these meanings, "philosophy and science are equivalent, and the terms are of equal scope and extent (*aequalis . . . latitudinis*), and there are as many philosophies as there are sciences" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 4). But, he continued, according to both Aristotle and Plato we can differentiate among the sciences between those that are 'contemplative', such as theology ("which modern scholars call metaphysics, a name unknown to the ancients"), physics, and mathematics; those that are 'active': economics, politics, and ethics; and those that are 'effective': analytics, dialectic, and rhetoric as well as medicine, poetry, sculpture, and painting (if these latter are considered as sciences and not as arts) (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 4-5).

If one looks at the second of the Aristotelian definitions, "philosophy means the same thing as wisdom (*sapientia*), since both embrace the knowledge and understanding of fundamental ideas (*principiorum intellectum et scientiam continent*)"; and since for Aristotle *principium* in its proper sense is substance (*substantia*), "there will be at least as many sorts of philosophies and wisdom as there are kinds of substances". It follows that if philosophy is taken in this second meaning it will include theology, the object of which is God, and physics, subdivided in turn into *astrologia* and *physica sublunaris* according to whether its proper object is the heavenly bodies or nature (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 5). Therefore, Jonsius concluded, "according to this meaning, the theologian and the physicist will be the only philosophers" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 6).

But in Aristotle 'philosophy' also has a third and more specific meaning: "God is indeed the first being, the absolute first principle, the first cause of all things and of all beings and also the final end (*ultimus finis*) of all effects, actions, and contemplation", and thus philosophy, considered "*par excellence* and absolutely" (*kat'exochen et absolute*), will be theology (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 6).

Jonsius accepted the first of the Aristotelian definitions of philosophy, which was the fullest and most comprehensive: "We shall, as best we can, concern ourselves with those who wrote the history of the sayings of the philosophers in the sense given by the first definition — that is, those who devoted themselves to the liberal sciences" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 10). Jonsius thus stated his intention of discussing all those scholars who had written the history of any one of the many different sciences in which human understanding had manifested itself.

Having made clear what kind of historians he intended to write about, Jonsius concluded the chapter with a final explanation. Those who in their

different ways had written about the practitioners of the liberal sciences (that is, the historians of the 'philosophers' according to the very wide definition adopted by Jonsius) had differed greatly from one another in their methods of treating their material:

those who took up the task of writing about the events and actions they observed (*qui scribendis rerum gestarum observationibus se accingunt*) usually did not adopt the same method of expounding their chosen subject: while some provided an impression of history in one general picture (*uno obtuto imaginem historiae exhibent*), others revealed it in all its details (*per partes inlustrant*); . . . this one expounded the history of the philosophers in general (*universe*), that one recounted the life of Aristotle or Plato or someone else individually (*sigillatim*); one listed books, another listed followers (*discipulos*) (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 10).

In this context, Jonsius also mentioned the distinction that Theodoret had made between the historians who had set out nothing but the teachings (*dogmata tantum*) of the philosophers and those who had described their lives as well as their doctrines (*dogmata simul et vitas*). Jonsius believed that a third category of historians should be added to these, namely those "who wrote only about the lives (*vitas tantum*) of the philosophers", and even a fourth category, those "who published works dealing specifically with the books and writings of the philosophers, with their disciples, adversaries, sects, the later history of their teaching (*fortuna*), with the places in which they taught and their teaching methods, and other things of this kind, all adapted to this sort of historical writing" (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 10). In Jonsius' opinion all of these writers, whatever method they followed, had a rightful place in the history or historiography of philosophy. He therefore intended to concern himself with them all:

we shall examine, without wishing to exclude anyone (*nullo habito discrimine*), those who put into written form the complete history of philosophy, or part of it, all of them without exception — or at least most of them, and of those the most worthy — and we shall search out and recount whatever ancient history can tell us about them (*quicquid de iis antiquitas . . . suggerit, . . . persequemur*), in so far as this may be of use to our task, with as much care and diligence as we are able bring to it, in a prose style which may however from time to time be a little more informal (*sermone . . . paullo liberiori*) than might be required by the manner appropriate to our purpose and design (*quam instituti nostri ratio exigit*) (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, p. 10).

In the second chapter of Bk. 1 Jonsius continued his introductory remarks by listing some of the difficulties which, in his view, were those most frequently encountered by historians of ancient historiography. He described the six most common sources of error: the existence of the name of an

author in a corrupt form could give rise to the belief that there were several authors instead of just one (*De Scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 12–13); the case in which two individuals shared the same name was one of the most frequent sources of confusion (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 13–14); taking the surname (*cognomen*) of an author instead of his first name (*pro nomine*) could bring about an apparent increase in the number of writers (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 14–15); the misreading of a truncated or abbreviated nominative as a genitive (*ellipsis nominativi sub genitivis latens*) might give a false or misleading impression of the family connections between authors (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 15–16); the attribution of several different ‘localized’ surnames or forms of a surname (*localia cognomina*) to the same author might appear to refer to different individuals (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 16–19); occasionally, part of a work might be taken for a work in its own right, thus misleading the scholar about the number of extant works by a particular author (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 19–20).

These observations, which appear at the conclusion of the chapter (Bk. 1, ch. 2), do not depart from the scholarly conventions of the historiographical tradition of the time, and they bring to an end the introductory discussion of method with which the author prefaces his exposition. The next chapter (Bk. 1, ch. 3) begins the actual treatment of the subject. The order which Jonsius followed was chronological. Remaining faithful to the criteria he had adopted, he spoke of all those who, from various perspectives, had “written the history of those who cultivated the liberal sciences” (*qui scientias liberales excolentium historiam scripserunt*), all of whom, indeed, he considered to be ‘philosophers’. For all these historians Jonsius went to great trouble to establish their dates of birth and death, the places where they had lived, the works written by or attributed to them, and the opinions expressed about them (correcting if necessary the erroneous opinions put forward by others). Jonsius gave particular care and attention to the listing of the sobriquets of each individual historian — a scrupulousness he had already shown in his history of the Peripatetic school, in which at least half of the surviving portion was devoted to a list of the sobriquets of Aristotle (*De historia peripatetica*, pp. 401–17).

Strictly speaking, Jonsius’ history of historiography was confined to the historians writing in antiquity, from the origins of the ancient tradition up to the sixth century AD. The first book dealt with historians who were writing in the period between the era of the Seven Wise Men and that of Epicurus (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 20–132); the second dealt with the historiographers of the period of Ptolemy II Philadelphus up to the time of Cicero (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 1, pp. 133–256); the third dealt with the historiography of philosophy in the Roman period (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. 11, pp. 1–106); and finally, the fourth book discussed historians “of unknown or uncertain date” (*incognitae aetatis*; *De scriptoribus*, Vol. 11, pp. 231–72). In the

first edition of the work Jonsius included one chapter (Bk. III, ch. 20) dealing with the historiography of philosophy in the medieval and modern periods. It constituted the last chapter of Bk. III, and had almost the form of an appendix: in it he listed only a few dozen names, without giving any opinions or critical assessment. Dornius, who took on the task of completing this part of Jonsius' work by rewriting ch. 20 and adding chs. 21-39 (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. II, pp. 106-230), attributed this lacuna to the illness which was to lead to the author's premature death. But the explanation is more likely to be the one put forward by Mario Dal Pra when he pointed out that "for scholars in the period around 1650, 'philosophy' still meant ancient philosophy" (M. Dal Pra, 'Giovanni Jonsio', *RCSF*, III (1948), p. 168), whereas half a century later, in the era of Dornius, the situation had already changed greatly.

Jonsius' main sources were two works by the great Dutch scholar and philologist J. G. Vossius — namely, the *De historicis graecis libri IV* and the *De historicis latinis libri III*, from which he drew scholarly opinions and information (being especially indebted to the former work), and in which he corrected a number of inaccuracies. He also depended on both works of Vossius for his method.

1.5. In 1716 the second edition of Jonsius' work, edited by Johann Christoph Dorn (Dornius), was published at Jena. Dornius, who was born at Schleusingen towards the end of the seventeenth century, was a theologian closely allied to the pietistic movement. He was also a bibliographer, and had been a pupil of Struve. After obtaining the degree of *Magister* at Jena in 1705, he became Rector of the grammar school at Blakenburg, where he remained for a considerable time, finally being appointed assistant librarian at Wolfenbüttel, where he died on 12 August 1752 shortly after taking up the post. He is known for two dissertations, *De doctis impostoribus* (Jena, 1703) and *De ruta saxonica, ex historiis et verbis fecialium enunciata* (Jena, 1705; 2nd edn, Halle, 1725), and for the two volumes of the *Bibliotheca theologica et critica, secundum singulas diviniore scientiae partes disposita* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1721-3).

Dornius made a number of additions and emendations to Jonsius' *De scriptoribus*: he added various footnotes, as well as 8 pages of *Addenda*, and made a few alterations to the summaries which introduce each chapter. He also added several new chapters (Bk. III, chs. 20-39), in which he continued Jonsius' history from the end of antiquity up until his own day (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. II, pp. 106-230). Dornius maintained the rigidly chronological method of exposition that Jonsius had adopted in his account of medieval and modern historiography. He also further subdivided the historians of philosophy of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries according to geographical areas. Like Jonsius before him, Dornius studied the historians who had written about all those scholars who had professed any of the liberal

sciences, while paying special attention to the historians of philosophy in the strict sense. For every author (to each of whom no more than one brief paragraph was given) he provided notes about his life, the titles of his work or works, and often a short assessment or evaluation as well. He paid particular attention to the most recently published works. Dornius dedicated his new edition of Jonsius' work to Buddeus, an eclectic philosopher who was already celebrated as a historian of philosophy. Dornius' sympathies went unhesitatingly to the eclectic and explicitly anti-Aristotelian philosophy of Christian Thomasius — whom he described as “liberator of the more refined philosophy” (*philosophiae cultioris vindex*; *De scriptoribus*, Vol. II, p. 202) and as “protector of philosophy's freedom” (*libertatis philosophiae vindex*; *De scriptoribus*, Vol. II, p. 203) — and also Buddeus, to whose historiographical work in the field of philosophy Dorn devoted one of the longest paragraphs in the section of the book for which he was responsible (*De scriptoribus*, Vol. II, pp. 204–6).

1.6. *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* was particularly appreciated and made use of by bibliographers of the time. Several decades after its publication, towards the end of the seventeenth century, Morhof described Jonsius as “a most diligent and accurate researcher of ancient writings” (*Polyhistor philosophicus*, Vol. I, ch. I, § 6); for Ménage *De scriptoribus* was a “most polished book” (*elegantissimus liber*; *In Diogenem Laertium observationes*, p. 2), and was a work to which he often referred. In 1711 a well-known periodical review, the *Neue Bibliothec* (published in Halle), expressed the wish for a new edition (*NB*, 1711, p. 381). But as early as 1715, Heumann was pointing out its limitations very clearly: “this treatise, which provides us with a sterile and unprofitable knowledge of the ancient writers and of their books, does indeed testify to its author's unusual diligence and extraordinary breadth of reading; however, it must be regarded more as a curiosity than as a useful book” (Heumann, Vol. I, pp. 167–8). Heumann acutely observed that the very title of Jonsius' book was misleading: “by the term ‘philosophy’ he means all arts and sciences without distinction, . . . and hence he discusses all those who have written about philosophers, musicians, poets, grammarians, and so on. It would have been much more appropriate were he to have entitled this work *historia litteraria antiqua*” (Heumann, Vol. I, pp. 168–9).

In 1716, when the second edition of the book appeared, the better-known journals of the time recorded the event without particular enthusiasm. In the *Mémoires de Trevoux* we can read:

A history of philosophy would certainly be agreeable and useful While erudition is necessary in order to carry this out, it would nevertheless be desirable that it be used with discernment, not loading down the reader with quantities of names of authors and quota-

tions that do not explain anything . . . Jonsius has not worked on this level; what he has outlined does not require reflection but only reading. He was content [simply] to collect the names of all those who have written on philosophy . . . indicating the time in which they lived or wrote (*MT*, 1716, pp. 1890-91).

The *Journal des Sçavans* praised its erudition, but did not fail to point out the greater usefulness of Fabricius' *Bibliotheca graeca* (*JS*, 1716, p. 646). In two brief notes from Jena, which appeared in the *Nouvelles Littéraires*, a very similar assessment can be found: both notes point out the far greater usefulness of Fabricius' work for those interested in the history of ancient philosophy (*NL*, 1715, pp. 305-6; 1716, pp. 274-5). In 1718 Heumann, in his review of Dornius' new edition, repeated the opinion he had earlier formulated of the first edition of Jonsius' book (Heumann, Vol. 11, pp. 310-18). However, the work continued to be recommended as a biographical sourcebook of some use for the historiography of philosophy. Nevertheless, some decades later, Brucker in the 'Dissertatio praeliminaris' to his *Historia critica*, while still recommending consultation of Jonsius' work for bibliographical purposes, expressed several reservations about it, very similar to those already voiced by Heumann in 1715: he praised the diligence of Jonsius,

who in his erudite work *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* . . . collected together the writers of every kind and every period who had in any way explained the history of philosophy. However, you may with reason regret that in this book attention is paid to ancient writers whose works have been lost, almost more than to those writings which have survived, and also that the meaning of the term 'philosophy' has been extended by this most diligent author to include all the arts, in such a way that it could seem to be a survey or review (*index*) of writers of ancient literary history rather than of philosophy (Brucker, Vol. 1, pp. 31-2).

1.7. On Jonsius' life and writings:

Jöcher, Vol. 11, col. 1962; *Nouvelle Biographie générale*, Vol. xxvi, cols. 922-3; *BUAM*, Vol. xxix, p. 367; *ADB*, Vol. xvi, p. 500.

On Dornius' life and writings:

Jöcher (Erg.), Vol. 11, col. 745; *Nouvelle Biographie générale*, Vol. xiv, cols. 638-9; *BUAM*, Vol. xvi, p. 236.

On the later history and reception of *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae*:

Morhof, *Polyhistoricus philosophicus*, Vol. 1, Bk. 1, § 6; Ménage, In *Diogenem Laertium observationes* (Amsterdam, 1692), p. 2; *NB*, 1711, pp. 381-7; Heumann, Vol. 1, pp. 159-79; Vol. 11, pp. 310-18; *NL*, 1715, pp. 305-6; 1716, pp. 274-5; *MT*, 1716, pp. 1890-900; *JS*, 1716, pp. 642-55; Stolle, pp. 334-5; Struve, Vol. 1, pp. 13-14; Brucker, Vol. 1, pp. 31-2; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. 1, pp. 24-7; Degérando, Vol. 1, p. 168.

On *De historia peripatetica*:

Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 154-8.

Critical literature:

Freyer, p. 21; M. Dal Pra, 'Giovanni Jonsio', *RCSF*, III (1948), pp. 159-69; I. Quiles, 'Contribución a la historiografía escolástica medieval de los siglos XVII y XVIII', in *L'homme et son destin d'après les penseurs du moyen-âge: Actes du premier Congrès international de philosophie médiévale, Louvain-Bruxelles, 28 août-4 septembre 1958* (Paris, 1960), pp. 731-2; L. Geldsetzer, preface to facsimile edn of Jonsius, *De scriptoribus* (Düsseldorf, 1968); Malusa, Origini, pp. 18-22; Rak, pp. 90-100; Braun, p. 82; Jasenas, p. 42; Del Torre, pp. 29-34.

2. ADAM TRIBBECHOW (1641-1687) *De doctoribus scholasticis*

2.1. Adam Tribbechow (Tribbechovius) was born at Lübeck on 11 August 1641. He received his early education from his father Justus, a teacher at the local grammar school. In 1659 he went to Rostock in order to complete his studies at the university, but shortly afterwards he left and moved first to Wittenberg, then to Leipzig. Finally, he went to Helmstedt, where he stayed for some time and where his teachers included Hermann Conring, Balthasar Cellarius, and above all Friedrich Ulrich Calixt, whose father Georg had been a well-known Lutheran theologian in the same university. Georg Calixt, who was accused both of 'syncretism' and of being a 'crypto-Catholic', had been a protagonist in the so-called syncretist controversy which had set the Lutheran extremists of Wittenberg against the more liberal and moderate theologians of Helmstedt. Tribbechow then returned to Lübeck where he worked as a private tutor for a short time. Then, after obtaining his master's degree at Rostock (23 April 1662), he taught history and philosophy for a time at Giessen, where he became known to scholars through the publication of his work on Scholasticism. In 1665 he moved to the university at Kiel, where at first he lectured on moral philosophy as a supernumerary professor (*Extraordinarius*); subsequently, as full professor (*Ordinarius*), he taught ecclesiastical and secular history (1666-72). In 1672 he left Kiel and university teaching for good in order to take up an advisory post to Ernst the Pious, Duke of Saxe-Gotha. There he was responsible for the education of the Duke's children and, more importantly, for the ecclesiastical and educational organization of this German principality. In 1677 he was named Superintendent-General by the Duke's successor. In 1680 he went to Orlamünde on behalf of the new Duke to negotiate a settlement of the dispute between the orthodox Protestants of Wittenberg, led by the theologian Abraham Calov, and the moderates of Jena, headed by Johann Musäus — a dispute which may be considered as one of the final episodes of

the syncretist controversy. During these years he participated also in the process of religious dialogue and debate between Catholics and Protestants that was organized and promoted by the Franciscan Christoph de Rojas y Spinola. Tribbechow died at Gotha on 17 August 1687.

2.2. Tribbechow's literary output — which is not especially abundant, since he gave up university teaching relatively early — was for the most part devoted to theological and religious subjects. Numerous dissertations date from his years of teaching at Kiel. Notable among them are the *Dissertatio de philosophia morum inter barbaros, praecipue orientales* (1666) and the five *Exercitationes ad Baronii Annales, inde ab eo, quo Casaubonus desiit, continuatae* (1667). While at Gotha he compiled, at the request of Ernst the Pious, two much-appreciated devotional books, first published in 1674 and 1676 respectively and subsequently reprinted many times. He also published an edition of the works of St Jerome, *Sancti Hieronimi Stridonensis opera omnia* (Frankfurt a. M. and Leipzig, 1684). However, his early work on the history of Scholasticism, entitled *De doctoribus scholasticis et corrupta per eos divinarum humanarumque rerum scientia liber singularis* (Giessen, 1665; repr. Jena, 1719, ed. C. A. Heumann) was much better known. Tribbechow left numerous unpublished works, mostly on topics relating to Church history and commentaries on the Scriptures, as well as the *Historia naturalismi a prima sua origine ad nostra usque tempora per suas classes deducta*, published by his son Johann at Jena in 1700.

2.3. Tribbechow's writings show clearly his dominant interest in studying theology, and an even greater interest in Church history — two spheres of interest that have a polemical and apologetic motivation. Both his history of Scholasticism and the *Historia naturalismi* (which is less well-known than the first but of much broader scope) in fact touch only marginally on the subject of the history of philosophy in the strict sense of the term, and it is entirely due to the fact that these writings were taken up by the historians of philosophy of the early eighteenth century that they have become texts for the history of philosophy.

For Tribbechow philosophy coincided exactly with the exercise of natural reason, that is to say, reason unguided (whether through ignorance or by deliberate choice) by Christian revelation. It follows that for him the history of philosophy — as, more generally, the history of every kind of merely human understanding — was nothing less than the history of the process which had led to the state of profanity and atheism that was the inevitable outcome of the use of natural reason and the exaltation of the speculative ideal of life. The fundamental category which Tribbechow used in his writings was that of 'naturalism' — a term by which he defined every theoretical or practical attitude of purely human derivation (that is, derived solely from man and his faculties, in so far as he was a merely natural creature). For Tribbechow, who used the term in a strictly theological sense, *naturalista* referred to any man who "lived through the mind", that is to say, whose soul was endowed only with natural life and vitality, unaided by the grace that alone makes it possible to understand the supernatural wisdom of God, of

which St Paul had spoken in 1 Corinthians 2: 14 (*Historia naturalismi*, p. 2). His condemnation of philosophy was complete and radical. However diverse the points of view expressed within ancient philosophy might have been, Tribbechow believed that the same basic error could be found in all of them — namely, the error that was the origin of all philosophy to the extent that it was the expression of merely human wisdom, as opposed to the mysterious and hidden wisdom of God: “Among the Greeks all philosophers were simply thinkers according to natural reason (*Graecia vero quot philosophos, tot naturalistas habuit*)” (*Historia naturalismi*, ‘Summa naturalismi’, p. 2). The fundamental error of the Scholastics had consisted not so much in having made use of a particular philosophy — namely, that of the pagan Aristotle — but rather in having dared to mix philosophy with Scripture, with the intention of constructing a theology which was philosophical or rational and not based rigorously on Scripture.

2.4. *De doctoribus scholasticis*

2.4.1. *De doctoribus scholasticis* consists of eight chapters of varying length, some very long, others (such as the final two) very short, totalling 368 pages. They are preceded by a brief preface written by the author. Each chapter except the last is subdivided into paragraphs (from a minimum of 4 up to a maximum of 10) and is preceded by a brief summary. The quotations, which are numerous and often very lengthy, are included within the text in italics. The bibliographical references are mostly given in the text itself, or, more rarely, as footnotes. In the 1719 edition (the one here cited) the work is preceded by a lengthy introduction by Heumann (‘Praefatio’, pp. vi–xxxii) and a life of Tribbechow (pp. xxxiii–xlvi) written by W. E. Tenzel. It is followed by a full and accurate ‘Index rerum’ occupying 62 unnumbered pages.

2.4.2. It is possible to deduce Tribbechow’s periodization of the history of Scholasticism from the sixth chapter. This is the most strictly historical part of the work, and bears the title ‘De autoribus doctrinae scholasticae et incrementis corruptelarum’ (*De doctoribus*, pp. 249–341). Here Tribbechow reproduced, with a few alterations, the same tripartite division of Scholasticism as had already been put forward in Protestant historiography at the end of the previous century by Peucer and Daneau,¹ and which was to be repeated in later Protestant writing on the history of philosophy during the eighteenth century. In Tribbechow’s scheme, true Scholasticism began with Gratian and Peter Lombard. From them the first period extended as far as Albertus Magnus, the second went from Thomas Aquinas to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, and the third from Durandus to the time of Luther.

However, according to Tribbechow, the age of Scholasticism in the strict sense was preceded by a preparatory period, lasting about five centuries,

¹ See above, Introduction, Section 1.5.

during which were sown the ever more numerous and persistent seeds of the later corruption of Christianity's faith and theological learning. Tribbechow devoted more space to this period of gestation of the "corruptions" (*corruptelae*) of the scholastic movement than he did to his treatment of the entire history of Scholasticism proper (*De doctoribus*, pp. 252-312). This preparatory period lasted from the fifth century — that is, in Church history (which to Tribbechow was much the most important aspect), from the end of the patristic era with the defeat of Pelagianism thanks to Augustine; in secular history, from the time of the barbarian invasions — up to the beginning of the pontificate of Gregory VII. Tribbechow regarded it as a period in which truth and error coexisted in the heart of the Church, in both West and East: "From the fifth century to the tenth existed an interregnum of truth and error, and, the seeds of corruption having been sown everywhere, at length that brood began to appear, with the Theologosophists acting as midwives" (*De doctoribus*, p. 252).

A first step towards the corruption of faith and Christian learning in this period of transition could already be seen in Pope Gregory the Great. Because of his rivalry with John IV, Patriarch of Constantinople (known as John the Faster), he became the first pope to lay claim to universal power over the Church by assuming the title of "servant of the servants of God (*servus servorum Dei*)" (*De doctoribus*, p. 253). Furthermore, Gregory the Great (himself a monk) gave impetus to the monastic movement and made use of it to strengthen his rule over the Church; he also introduced the doctrine of purgatory into Church dogma, favoured the cults of the saints, of the Virgin, and of relics, imposed celibacy on the clergy, and imposed order on the Roman liturgy, extending it, with the help of the monastic movement, to the entire Western Church (*De doctoribus*, pp. 254-67).

Tribbechow accorded a prominent place, in the centuries preceding Scholasticism, to John of Damascus in the East and to Bede in the West. He devoted several pages to John of Damascus (*De doctoribus*, pp. 280-85) because the Latin translation of his *De fide orthodoxa* was later to be the model for Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. John of Damascus's book was assessed in the light of Lutheran orthodoxy, and the judgment given of it, like that given of the Greek Church in general, was not so negative and dismissive. Tribbechow appreciated the completeness and rigour of *De fide orthodoxa*, although he recognized in it also the seeds of errors, which would later come to show more clearly the full extent of their pernicious effect, particularly with regard to the doctrines of original sin, grace, and purgatory. However, Tribbechow defended John of Damascus from the charge of having already formulated within the theology of the Eastern Church the equivalent of the Latin doctrine of transubstantiation. Tribbechow's assessment of Bede was also positive, in particular because Bede had taken up afresh the study of Augustine.

Tribbechow's exposition continued, in the domain of the Western Church, with Alcuin and Hrabanus Maurus — of whom he expressed a moderately positive judgment, even though Hrabanus Maurus' book on the Cross gave him an opportunity to speak at length about the idolatry to which the cult of the Cross would later give rise (*De doctoribus*, pp. 294-9) — while in that of the Eastern Church he mentioned Metaphrastus, author of stories of the saints and one who favoured the cult of icons (*De doctoribus*, p. 292). With the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh Tribbechow reached the threshold of Scholasticism. He devoted several pages to the dispute between Berengarius of Tours and Lanfranc, over the Eucharist, even though in his opinion it was not yet possible to speak of Scholasticism as such, because although Lanfranc and his supporters expressed their opinion in an exaggerated way when attacking Berengarius' heresy, they had not yet embraced the papist heresy of transubstantiation, which followed in the wake of the claim of the Papacy to universal hegemony (*De doctoribus*, p. 307).

The accession to the papal throne of Hildebrand as Gregory VII brought to an end the period of transition and opened the true age of Scholasticism, according to Tribbechow, who had already devoted several pages to the so-called *Dictatus Papae* — which he considered to be a genuine declaration of apostasy and a manifestation of the Antichrist (*De doctoribus*, pp. 81 ff.). As has been mentioned, for Tribbechow the first age of Scholasticism ran from Gratian to Albertus Magnus. Taking up at this point a thesis already put forward by Caspar Peucer, he maintained that the work of Gratian, preceded by that of the other canonists, had developed in more or less conscious and deliberate emulation of the renewal of the study of Roman law by the jurists of the University of Bologna. Gratian's example was followed at once in the theological field by Peter Lombard, who wrote his four books of *Sentences* in imitation of John of Damascus and Hugh of St Victor. Strictly speaking, the history of Scholasticism did not continue beyond Peter Lombard and Abelard, and so it was not by chance that Tribbechow's exposition should have come to a conclusion in a few pages. Judged as a whole, Scholasticism was nothing less than the instrument of the Papacy's desire for supremacy over the Church, and on the doctrinal and theological level it merely reproduced the ancient Pelagian heresy in a new form. Peter Lombard was followed by Roscelin of Compiègne and Peter Abelard, then by Albertus Magnus, who brought to an end the first period of Scholasticism. From the second period Tribbechow mentioned Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, but he particularly dwelt on the dominant influence exerted in the universities by the mendicant orders, which was unsuccessfully opposed by William of Saint-Amour (*De doctoribus*, pp. 327-33). For the third period of Scholasticism, beginning with Durandus of Saint-Pourçain and lasting until the time of Luther, Tribbechow mentioned by name only Johannes Duns

Scotus, Robert Holkot, Thomas Bricot, and a few others, refraining from listing all of their names, which would be an endless task (*De doctoribus*, p. 333). For this, the third period, he made no reference to particular doctrines, but merely gave a negative assessment of the whole: "into this era were poured all the worst dregs of corruption and barbarism" (*De doctoribus*, p. 335). Scholasticism came to an end with Luther and the Protestant Reformation, which signalled a return to the Gospel in its original purity, uncontaminated and uncomplicated by philosophy. All the same, according to Tribbechow, a form of Scholasticism had continued in the Catholic countries, as witnessed for example by the Council of Trent in its confirmation of 'papist Pelagianism'; and he further mentioned the names of Melchior Cano, Robert Bellarmine, Pedro da Fonseca, and Gabriel Vásquez.

2.4.3. The history of Scholasticism coincided exactly with the history of the papist heresy, which Tribbechow thought of as a papal theocracy — that is, the abandonment of Scripture and of the Fathers in favour of the human authority of the Popes and of the Papacy, and, simultaneously, the revival of the old Pelagian heresy (which had long ago been defeated by Augustine) with all the consequences that this entailed, in regard both to individual questions of theology, and, more generally, to the relationship between revelation and natural reason.

In the light of this central idea, which runs through the whole of Tribbechow's book, it is possible to distinguish various more specifically historiographical propositions, though they are concerned more with the history of the Church in the age of Scholasticism than with the history of scholastic philosophy as such. Tribbechow tended to locate the beginnings of Scholasticism as far as possible from the patristic era. In his appraisal of the long period of transition from the patristic to the scholastic era, he assessed the thinkers of that period (and, among them, those of the Eastern more than the Western tradition) in fairly positive terms, particularly in relation to such questions as the doctrine of justification by faith and the doctrine of the Eucharist, over which there was more disagreement between Catholics and Protestants. It was as if he wished to emphasize the gradualness of the departure from religious orthodoxy — an orthodoxy which had been fully enjoyed in the patristic age and which had only been lost entirely with the affirmation of Papal theocracy, and was later to be restored by Luther. From this he developed a picture of medieval thought in which the very period which was usually considered to be the most obscure and the most culturally decadent in fact appeared to be the least corrupt both in faith and in theological learning.

For Tribbechow the beginnings of Scholasticism coincided with the full and undisputed affirmation of papal theocracy under Gregory VII. He devoted many pages of his book to the progressive development of this

power (cf. in particular *De doctoribus*, pp. 71-104). And he identified the instruments by which it was affirmed, slowly but surely, from Gregory the Great to Gregory VII. These were, firstly, a monasticism that became increasingly widespread, more effectively organized and powerful, until it was finally transformed into an army in the service of Rome for the political and religious control of Europe (*De doctoribus*, pp. 104-17); and, on the other hand, the work of accumulation, but also of falsification, carried out by the canonists, from the false donation of Constantine to the pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, up to the activity of the canonists of the age of Gregory VII (*De doctoribus*, pp. 76-84).

Gratian's *Decretum* and the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard signalled, according to Tribbechow, the birth of Scholasticism proper, an event that followed immediately upon the establishment of papal theocracy by Gregory VII. The close connection between the emergence of papal theocracy on the one hand and the work of Gratian and Peter Lombard on the other, and hence between papal power, canon law, and scholastic theology, represented one of the central theses of Tribbechow's historical reconstruction, and it conditioned his entire interpretation of Scholasticism. Peter Lombard's systematization of theology and that of the scholastic doctors who followed him corresponded in every particular — whether in regard to method or to the effects achieved — to the systematization used in their own field by the canonists. In both cases this was a matter of forms of theological 'rationalism' and of particular cultural methods being placed at the service of the papal plan for domination over the Christian church. On the subject of the *Decretum Gratiani* Tribbechow quoted Luther's opinion:

In the book which they call the *Decretum Gratiani* there are many excellent things taken from the Fathers (*multa . . . praeclara ex Patribus collecta*), from which it is possible to perceive the state of the ancient, or rather primitive, Church, especially the Roman Church. . . . But Gratian, being unduly servile towards the Popes, who were already at that time claiming for themselves dominion over Christ's Church, either suppressed or perverted the excellent teachings and principles of the Fathers because of the wishes of the Popes, with what seemed to be pious intent but which provided a very bad example (*pia (ut apparet) intentione, sed pestilentissimo exemplo*). For, from that time onwards, the Pope became so proud that he even denied that canon law originated from him (*De doctoribus*, pp. 313-14).

Tribbechow criticized Peter Lombard for abandoning the old method and instead complicating the simplicity of faith in an unnecessary and pernicious way through philosophical distinctions and subtleties:

[Peter] Lombard did not think much of the ancient method, because it did not stimulate students sufficiently; and having thus gone be-

yond the simplicity of faith with complicated questions and philosophical distinctions, he made theology so difficult that, just as legal formulae can be explained only by experts in law, so also doctrines of the faith could be taught and explained only by learned masters (*De doctoribus*, p. 315).

So far as the content of scholastic doctrine was concerned, Tribbechow examined theological subjects almost exclusively. He furthermore tended to view the doctrine as a whole, making little distinction between different schools and thinkers, and considering it identical with Catholic doctrine (in the theological questions of grace, transubstantiation, indulgences, and ecclesiastical celibacy, for example). Above all he identified it with Pelagianism (*De doctoribus*, pp. 57-70, 320), which he linked with the theological rationalism of the Scholastics and the legalistic and juridical spirit of the canonists. 'Rationalism' and 'naturalism' represented for Tribbechow the original root of the sophistries and subtleties, and the manifestations of scepticism, to be found in the learning of that period. The main accusation he brought against Peter Lombard, the first of the scholastic theologians, concerned the doctrine of justification. Tribbechow pointed out that, for Lombard, "it is not a mistake (*non incongrue*) to call grace a virtue because it heals and succours the feeble will of man" (*De doctoribus*, p. 318); with this statement, however, Peter Lombard had sown "the first seeds of moralistic theology (*moralisticae theologiae prima semina*)", which would later be developed first by Abelard and then by Thomas Aquinas, and, above all, by Duns Scotus (*De doctoribus*, pp. 318-19). Thus through Lombard the Pelagian heresy would spread among the Scholastics, thereby extending its influence and corrupting more and more (*De doctoribus*, p. 320). Moreover, the ascription of the name Stoics to the Scholastics by Aventinus, Erasmus, and others, was interpreted by Tribbechow as evident proof of the Pelagianism that was present in all the Scholastics without exception from the time of Peter Lombard.

The Stoics . . . convinced themselves that it was possible to restrain the passions and to repress the desires by the exercise of reason (*se frenare cupidines, et affectus rationis imperio coercere*), in such a way as to live the life of the gods on this earth. And Pelagius took up these ravings of the Stoics (*Stoicorum deliria*) in his propositions about free will (*de libero arbitrio sententiis*) (*De doctoribus*, p. 320).

Tribbechow devoted many pages of his book to the theme of the vain subtleties and the obscure and barbarous language of the Scholastics, as well as to a denunciation of their empty logical formalism (*De doctoribus*, pp. 43-57). In particular he dwelt on the negative consequences that all this had for genuine theology: the false subtlety and the logical formalism of the Scholastics were a result of the lack of distinction between revealed wisdom and rational reflection, and at the same time they were the cause of an ever

greater and more pernicious confusion between the two levels of understanding (*De doctoribus*, pp. 58–70).

In the matter of philosophy and theology Tribbechow found little diversity within Scholasticism. He summarily dismissed even the dispute about universals as evidence simply of the litigiousness of the Scholastics (*De doctoribus*, pp. 223–4), in much the same way as he referred to their strife-ridden internal divisions into schools and factions, which were forever fighting among themselves (*De doctoribus*, p. 225). The differences between them could be seen, rather, in their contrasting attitudes towards papal power and in the dispute between the Papacy and the Empire (see for example the comment on Ockham, *De doctoribus*, pp. 85, 230). Concerning the Aristotelianism of the Scholastics, Tribbechow's opinion was twofold: on the one hand he harshly condemned their abandonment both of the Fathers and of the Platonism which had been characteristic of the patristic tradition in favour of the pagan Aristotle, even to the extent of making him into a precursor "in the natural realm (*in naturalibus*)" of Christ himself (*De doctoribus*, p. 223), and putting him, from the second age of Scholasticism onwards, in the place of Augustine as judge in theological controversies (*De doctoribus*, p. 332; see also pp. 61–7, 171). On the other hand, he emphasized repeatedly that the Scholastics, however much they considered Aristotle as their master, had nevertheless not fully understood him (*De doctoribus*, pp. 118–28). Thus Tribbechow's anti-Aristotelianism was less all-embracing than it might appear: he roundly condemned the application of Aristotelian philosophy to research in the field of theology, defending the idea — typical of the Protestant tradition — of a rigidly biblical theology. At the same time he also strove to make a distinction between Aristotelian philosophy as such and the Aristotelianism of the Scholastics — as well as that of the Italian Renaissance, which was considered to be the offspring of the former and was condemned as atheistic.

2.4.4. As Garin has observed (and as can be seen from the present exposition of its contents), Tribbechow's book was not in fact written with the historical intention attributed to it by scholars of the following century, from Heumann to Brucker, but had primarily a polemical and apologetic purpose. *De doctoribus scholasticis* is a juvenile work, a work of compilation by a 24-year-old theologian who had already become involved in the Protestant controversies of the time, during his peregrinations between the universities of Wittenberg, Leipzig, and Helmstedt while completing his studies, and through his close association with theologians, scholars, and other learned men.

The sources of this compilation (which was well-received and enjoyed a good reputation) were, first, the Protestant historical writings of the previous century, from the *Catalogus testium veritatis* of Flacius Illyricus to the

so-called *Centuriae Magdeburgenses*, the *Chronicon* of Johann Cario, and the revisions of Cario by Melanchthon and especially by Caspar Peucer.² We can also find references to the *Annales* of Baronius and to the collections of historical materials made by German scholars at the end of the fifteenth century. However, the scheme of periodization adopted by Tribbechow, as well as all his fundamental propositions, came from Peucer, including both the subdivision of the history of Christianity into three periods (each of five centuries) and the tripartite division of Scholasticism. Many of the more specific ideas were also derived from Protestant historical writing, particularly from Peucer: these included such theses as the interdependent relationship between the work of Gratian and Peter Lombard and the theocracy of Gregory VII, the partially favourable assessment of the period between the end of the patristic and the beginning of the scholastic era, the greater appreciation of the Greek church by comparison with the Latin, the judgement of the first scholastic period in less radically negative terms than that of subsequent periods, and the similar judgment accorded to the inauthentic Aristotelianism of the Scholastics.

Tribbechow quoted extensively — this too being typical of the historiographical tradition to which he belonged — from the texts with the strongest arguments against Scholasticism produced by humanistic-Renaissance scholarship, in particular from Erasmus' *Anti-barbari*, from Vives' *De causis corruptarum artium*, from the historical works of Aventinus, and from Cornelius Agrippa's *De vanitate et incertitudine scientiarum*. But he referred also to passages from Dante, Marsilius of Padua, Petrarch, Gianfrancesco Pico, Lorenzo Valla, Campanella, Petrus Ramus, and Bacon. Some of these quotations are very long, and Tribbechow used them in order to illustrate the corruption brought into philosophy and theology by the Scholastics and the consequent reduction of learning to an empty logical formalism, and, more particularly, to denounce the equivocal mixture of theology and philosophy typical of that period.

Tribbechow's work contains a number of errors, and in his preface to the 1719 edition Heumann was at pains to draw attention to some of them (pp. xxix–xxx), as for example the assertion that Gratian and Peter Lombard were brothers. The book does not offer systematically presented information on the lives of individual scholastic theologians nor on what they wrote, still less any accurate exposition of the content of their writings — as would become the norm for the historians of philosophy in the following century. Indeed, Heumann criticized Tribbechow specifically for these omissions: "the life, writings and fate of each of the Scholastics ought to have been examined" (p. xxx).

² See also G. Piaia, 'Intorno alle origini della moderna storiografia filosofica', *Verifiche*, VIII (1979), pp. 226–7.

2.5. Tribbechow did not intend to compose a history of scholastic philosophy, but rather, writing from the point of view of Lutheran orthodoxy according to the formula furnished by a now well-established tradition, to produce a text that was both an anti-Catholic polemic and a chapter of Church history. Nevertheless, *De doctoribus scholasticis* enjoyed considerable success throughout the eighteenth century as a history of scholastic philosophy, and this is how it has been regarded from that time on.

As early as 1692 Morhof, in his *Polyhistor philosophicus*, was advising anyone who wanted to understand the history of scholastic philosophy to read, "in preference to anything else" (*prae caeteris omnibus*), *De doctoribus scholasticis* by Tribbechow, who had "taken great trouble in his treatment of this subject (*cum cura tractavit*)" (Morhof, *Polyhistor philosophicus*, Vol. 1, ch. 13, §1). Struve, in his preface to the 1716 edition of Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophiae*, placed Tribbechow (along with Jakob Thomasius) among the fathers of the modern German tradition of philosophical historiography, and Dorn devoted a paragraph to him, praising his book as being among the most important on the subject: "He expounded the ideas, deeds and writings (*studia, res gestas et libros*) of the Scholastics in a very learned way (*doctissime*)" (Jonsius, Vol. 11, pp. 171-2). But it was above all Heumann who definitively established his reputation as the historian of scholastic philosophy, by editing and republishing *De doctoribus scholasticis* in 1719. In fact, as Heumann made clear, he did not by any means share Tribbechow's harshly anti-philosophical line of argument: certainly, he too considered scholastic philosophy to be "philosophy reduced to the position of a slave to papal theology" (*De doctoribus*, p. xxii), and hence a false philosophy; but in Heumann's opinion it was also necessary to know how to distinguish and not to make a general rule out of one example,

so that we do not meet the same fate that seems to have befallen many (and even our friend Tribbechow was not far from this danger), by which, together with that depraved scholastic philosophy, which has grievously contaminated theology and is thoroughly unworthy of the noble and holy name of philosophy, we would simply condemn philosophy as such and forbid almost all study of the subject to students of theology (*De doctoribus*, pp. xxv-xxvi).

However, he had no doubts about the value of the book as a historical work, though one which perhaps stood midway between the history of philosophy and the history of the Church (Tribbechow "earned in no small measure the gratitude of students of the history of philosophy and of the Church, and he should be placed by no means last among the writers of both of these kinds of history"). In any case it was for Heumann a book "whose learning was as great as its usefulness (*tam doctus tamque utilis*)", and its republication would be gratefully welcomed by scholars (*De doctoribus*, p. xxix).

At an interval of more than twenty years, Brucker confirmed Heumann's

judgment: Tribbechow's *De doctoribus scholasticis* "stands out among the others, presenting as it does many subjects set out diligently together with doctrine and plenty of cited texts (*multa . . . non sine doctrina et lectionis copia operose dicta*), which can do a great deal to unveil the true face of scholastic philosophy and to reveal its detestable character". Brucker was not uncritical:

It is, however, regrettable that such an important subject should have been treated more with passion than with impartiality, that the author should have included many irrelevant things, and that many things were derived not from direct and true sources (*ex proximis verisque fontibus non hausta*) but from the testimony of witnesses whose minds were by no means free from prejudice.

Nevertheless, Brucker's judgment confirmed Tribbechow (whose writings were little read after the appearance of the *Historia critica*) as the first historian of scholastic philosophy (Brucker, Vol. III, p. 709 n. a).

2.6. The life of Tribbechow, written by W. E. Tenzel, was printed at the beginning of the 1719 edition of the *De doctoribus scholasticis* (pp. xxxiii-xlvii); cf. also Jöcher, Vol. IV, cols. 1310-12; *ADB*, Vol. xxxviii, pp. 598-601; *EF*, Vol. VI, cols. 608-9.

On the reception of *De doctoribus scholasticis*:

Morhof, *Polybistor philosophicus*, Vol. I, ch. 13, § 1; Jonsius, Vol. I, 'Lectori benevolo', fol. iir; Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 30, § 6, pp. 171-2; *NL*, 1719, p. 528; J. C. Dorn (Dornius), *Bibliotheca theologica critica* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1721-3), Vol. I, p. 167; Vol. II, p. 151; Struve, Vol. I, p. 227; Vol. II, p. 206; Brucker, Vol. III, p. 709 n. a; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, Vol. VI, pp. 53-4; Fülleborn, fasc. XI-XII, pp. 236-7; Buhle, Vol. V, p. 103; Tennemann, Vol. VIII, p. 990.

Critical opinion:

De Wulf, Vol. I, pp. 25-6; Petersen, p. 399; *GAF*, Vol. III, p. lv; I. Quiles, 'Contribución a la historiografía escolástica medieval de los siglos XVII y XVIII', in *L'homme et son destin d'après les penseurs du moyen-âge: Actes du premier Congrès international de philosophie médiévale*, Louvain-Bruxelles, 28 août-4 septembre 1958 (Paris, 1960), pp. 732-3; E. Garin, 'Anedotti di storia della storiografia: La polemica contro la scolastica, I: Adamo Tribbecchovio', in *Studi in onore di A. Corsano* (Manduria, 1970), pp. 309-15, repr. in id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo: Studi e ricerche* (Pisa, 1972), pp. 195-205; Del Torre, pp. 38-42; Braun, p. 372; G. Piaia, 'Intorno alle origini della moderna storiografia filosofica', *Verifiche*, VIII (1979), pp. 225-7.

3. JAKOB THOMASIIUS (1622-1684)* *Schediasma historicum*

3.1. Jakob Thomas, latinized to Thomasius (which has remained the usual version of his name), was born at Leipzig in August 1622 as son of the jurist

* by Giovanni Santinello.

Michael Thomas. After attending the grammar school at Gera, he entered the University of his native city in 1640. He soon moved to the University of Wittenberg, but completed his studies (in philosophy, philology, mathematics) at the University of Leipzig, where he graduated *Magister philosophiae* in 1643. He spent his whole life there, devoted to his studies and to teaching, both in the university and in two grammar schools, the *Nicolaischule* and the *Thomasschule*, of which he became Rector in 1670 and 1676 respectively. His main interests were philology, philosophy, and theology (even though he never taught the last of these): in all these fields the historical dimension predominated, and it is not by chance that the title of *polyhistor* sometimes appears in posthumous editions of his works.³ In this way he was linked to a very specific tradition, that of polyhistory, but he made an innovative contribution to it.

In 1653, following the death the previous year (1652) of Friedrich Leubnitz (father of the future philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm), Thomasius succeeded him in the chair of moral philosophy. Then in 1656 he became professor of dialectic, and, for a period of twenty years, from 1659 until his death, he was professor of eloquence. As such he had the young Leibniz among his students from 1661 until 1663.⁴ Thomasius presided at the disputation of 30 May 1663 at which Leibniz presented his dissertation *De principio individui*, opening the debate with highly complimentary words about the young graduate in his introduction (*Praefatio*), which was entitled *Origo controversiae de principio individuationis*.⁵

Together with his vast erudition and the insatiable curiosity of a true historian, Thomasius took a lively interest in the cultural situation of his own time, which he hoped to influence precisely through his disinterested love of historical truth. He was averse to the thought of the *novatores* (Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, Grotius) and remained loyal to Aristotelianism, which, beginning with Melanchthon, had spread more and more widely within the German Lutheran universities — at first comprising only the logical, rhetorical, and ethical teachings, but eventually embracing even metaphysics, which the orthodox Lutherans had fought against for a long time. This was the

³ E.g., *M. Jacobi Thomae P. P. Polyhistoris Philosophia instrumentalis et theoretica* (Leipzig, 1705).

⁴ He was Leibniz's teacher in rhetoric (*eloquentia*), not in philosophy, at least on the academic level. But in private Thomasius certainly exercised a certain philosophical influence over Leibniz, as the surviving letters testify. This is the conclusion of G. Aceti, 'Jakob Thomasius e il pensiero filosofico-giuridico di Goffredo Guglielmo Leibniz', *Jus*, n.ser., viii (1957), pp. 280–81, and W. Kabitz, *Die Philosophie des jungen Leibniz* (Heidelberg, 1909; repr. Hildesheim and New York, 1974). See also id., 'Die Bildungsgeschichte des jungen Leibniz', *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Erziehung und des Unterrichts*, 11 (1912), pp. 164–84. On the other hand, H. Joly, 'Thomasius et l'université de Leibniz pendant la jeunesse de Leibniz', *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, 111 (1878), pp. 482, 497, describes him simply as Leibniz's teacher, without further distinction or qualification; while K. Strecker, *Der Brief des Leibniz an Jakob Thomasius vom 20/30 April 1669* (Würzburg, 1885), pp. 1–3, describes him specifically as Leibniz's teacher in philosophy.

⁵ J. Thomasius, *Miscellanea varii argumenti* (Leipzig, 1737), 'Praefatio XLIII', pp. 246–53; and cf. G. Aceti, *Jakob Thomasius*, pp. 281–2.

Schulphilosophie, the so-called 'philosophy of the baroque', in which Leibniz himself was trained. Thomasius upheld a pure form of Aristotelianism in the manner of the school of Altdorf (Michael Piccart and Ernst Soner) and of Christian Dreier, and he was against the ontological teachings favoured by the method of Aristotelian interpretation modelled on Suárez. However, seeing that this method was by now victorious in the university schools, he unwillingly adapted himself to it.

On this foundation (which was anything but solid) and well aware of the theoretical weakness of such a position, Thomasius worked faithfully for "a true faith and a pious life" — the two fundamental aspects, as he said, of Christianity. The field of his work was education: his activity lay in teaching, in scholastic manuals, in the reform of institutions. An important example of this can be found, for instance, in the scholastic regulations for the grammar schools of which he was Rector, inspired as they were by a moderate anticlassicism with a religious emphasis.⁶ Jakob Thomasius died at Leipzig on 9 September 1684. He had married twice and had ten children. Christian, a child of the first marriage, was born in 1655.

3.2. One of the first works published by Thomasius was an edition, with additions and corrections, of a philological work by the Jesuit Orazio Torsellini; and in the fields of philosophy and literature should be mentioned his editions of Pliny, Vossius, Paulus Manutius, Marcus Antonius Muretus, and Marcus Zuerius van Boxborn.⁷ Other literary-historical works appeared posthumously in a collection by various authors (whose individual contributions were published anonymously): *Observationes selectae ad rem litterariam spectantes*, 9 vols. (Halle, 1700–1707). Weiss, in the article 'Thomasius' in the *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne* (2nd edn, Vol. xli, pp. 408–9), attributed all the writings contained in the ninth volume of the *Observationes* to Thomasius, having identified them with the help of C. A. Heumann's short work entitled *Revelatio auctorum observationum Halensium latinarum*, printed in the *Miscellanea Lipsiensia nova* (Vol. 1, pp. 292–318).

The following works are concerned with philosophy and its history, and with the history of theology. The *Breviarium ethicorum ad Nichomacum* (Leipzig, 1658) reflects Thomasius's early university teaching of ethics: it includes in an appendix the oration 'Pro Aristotele, quod iure suo usus fuerit, negans (I Nicom. 3) idoneum ethicae auditorum esse iuvenem', given on 27 April 1653 at the beginning of his lectures on ethics at Leipzig;⁸ *Philosophia practica continuis tabellis in usum privatum comprehensa* (Leipzig, 1661; another edition, *cum annotationibus . . . editio novissima*, Leipzig, 1702): this work was studied and annotated by the young Leibniz, whose annotations have been

⁶ The regulations were published by R. Sachse, *Acta Nicolaitana et Thomana* (Leipzig, 1912); see also id., *Das Tagebuch des Rektors Jakob Thomasius* (Leipzig, 1896).

⁷ H. Torsellini, *De particulis latinae orationis libellus, recognitus olim et locupletatus a J. Thomasio* (1651; another edn, Leipzig, 1709); Pliny, *Epistulae . . . ex recensione M. Jacobi Thomasii* (1675; 2nd edn, Halle, 1686); G. J. Vossius, *Rhetorices contractae . . . cum tabulis synopticis M. J. Thomasii* (1681; Madrid, 1781); P. Manutius, *Epistolarum libri XII. Eiusdem praefationes* (1682; Leipzig, 1698); M. A. Muretus, *Orationes, epistulae et poemata, cum praefatione et insignibus argumentis M. J. Thomasii* (Leipzig, 1672; many later editions).

⁸ It appears also as 'Oratio ix' in the complete edition of the *Orationes* (Leipzig, 1683), pp. 144–98.

published.⁹ Some years later appeared his most famous work on the history of philosophy, the *Schediasma historicum, quo occasione definitionibus vetustae, qua philosophia dicitur γνῶσις τῶν ὄντων varia discutiuntur ad historiam tum philosophicam tum ecclesiasticam pertinentia: imprimis autem inquiritur in ultimas origines philosophiae gentilis, et quatuor in ea sectarum apud Graecos praecipuarum; haereseos item Simonis Magi, Gnosticorum, Massalianorum et Pelagianorum; denique theologiae mysticae pariter ac scholasticae* (Leipzig, 1665). Another edition was published under the same title (Dorpat, 1694); it is this edition that is cited here. This was followed by a second edition of the *Schediasma*, edited by his son Christian with an altered title: *Origines historiae philosophicae et ecclesiasticae, h.e. philosophiae gentilis etc. . . . occasione definitionis vetustae, qua philosophia dicitur γνῶσις τῶν ὄντων* (Halle, 1699).

Certain manuals were intended by Thomasius more or less exclusively for school use: *Specimen tabularum novarum in Hugonis Grotii de iure belli et pacis libros* (1670), mentioned by Leibniz in two letters to the author;¹⁰ *Erotemata logica pro incipientibus* (Leipzig, 1670; 2nd edn, enlarged and corrected, Leipzig, 1678); *Erotemata metaphysica pro incipientibus* (Leipzig, 1670; 2nd edn, enlarged and corrected, Leipzig, 1678); *Erotemata rhetorica pro incipientibus* (Leipzig, 1670; 2nd edn, enlarged and corrected, Leipzig, 1678). These three manuals — which treat their subjects according to a 'catechistic' formula, that is, by question and answer (*erotemata*) — were issued together in a fourth edition under the collective title *Philosophia instrumentalis et theoretica* (Leipzig, 1705). The *Erotemata metaphysica* has an appendix entitled 'Historia variae fortunae, quam disciplina metaphysica iam sub Aristotele, iam sub Scholasticis, iam sub recentibus experta est' (pp. 69–87: references to 1705 edn). Other books for school use were *Doctrina Imperii Romano-Germanici in usum incipientium tabulis comprehensa* (Leipzig, 1672), and *Delucidationes Stablinianae in partem priorem regularum philosophicarum Danielis Stablii* (Leipzig, 1676). The latter work was mentioned both by Leibniz and by Thomasius' son Christian, who pointed out how his father, while illustrating certain metaphysical precepts of the Jena professor Daniel Stahl (1589–1654), had found the opportunity to broach a historical subject by looking more deeply into the differences between the four chief sects of Greek philosophy.¹¹ Thomasius returned to this theme of the four sects of Greek classical thought (Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Epicurean), a theme to which he had already given some attention in the *Schediasma*, in one of the 21 *Dissertationes* published together with his short treatise on the conflagration of the Stoic world: *Exercitatio de stoica mundi exustione cui accesserunt argumenti varii, sed imprimis ad historiam stoicae philosophiae facientes dissertationes XXI* (Leipzig, 1676).¹² This work represents a true history of ancient thought (with extensive digressions on medieval thought), and consists of a cycle of dissertations all linked to the central subject and argument. In addition to

⁹ G. W. Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, 6th ser., *Philosophische Schriften*, Vol. 1, *Notae ad Jacobum Thomasium*, pp. 42–67; Vol. II, *Untersuchungen und Erläuterungen*, pp. 542–4. On these annotations cf. also G. Aceti, *Jakob Thomasius*, pp. 287–313, with extensive quotations also from the original text by Thomasius to which the annotations refer.

¹⁰ Letters from Leibniz to Thomasius: 19/29 December 1670 (no. 11); 23 December 1670 (no. 12), in G. W. Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, pp. 32, 34.

¹¹ J. Thomasius, *Origines historiae philosophicae*, 'Praefatio' (by Christian Thomasius), pp. [3–4].

¹² A second edition, edited by the author and dedicated to his colleague, the teacher of Hebrew J. Carpzov, is entitled *Dissertationes ad stoicae philosophiae et ceteram philosophicam historiam facientes argumenti varii; quibus praemittitur de exustione mundi stoica exercitatio* (Leipzig, 1682: all quotations from this edition); the second dissertation is entitled 'Quatuor Graecorum sectae praecipuae', pp. 29–36. In his dedication to Carpzov Thomasius said that he had in this way kept his promise, made to his readers eleven years previously, to speak at greater length on the subject of the Greek sects.

examining the doctrine of the origin and end of the world according to the teaching of each of the four sects, these dissertations discuss the eternity of the world according to Plato and according to Aristotle, as well as a whole series of Stoic themes (such as the great year, the mortality of the gods, the Phoenix as a symbol of the world reborn from fire, matter, fate, God's relationship to the world as the 'informing form' [*forma informans*], the mortality of souls, the partial Stoicism of Origen's thought).

Thomasius' academic activity was also manifested in a number of different ways, such as his participation in academic disputations when students were admitted to higher degrees, the composition of orations to be delivered on various occasions, and the production of *Programmata* or *Dissertationes* on a variety of subjects. When Thomasius presided at disputations (the titles of 86 of these, together with the names of the respondents — that is, the students who were arguing or defending their theses — and the date when Thomasius acted as *Praeses*, are listed in the 'Index disputationum' supplied by Christian in an appendix to the *Origines*) he usually delivered an opening speech called a *Praefatio*, that is, an introductory address on the subject itself or a related theme. Thomasius himself collected these introductions (of which there are 85 in all) and published them together under the title *Praefationes sub auspiciis disputantium suarum in Academia Lipsiensi recitatae* (Leipzig, 1681); the collection was republished (with a few small alterations, according to Aceti), under the title: *Miscellanea varii argumenti maximam partem ex historia literaria, ecclesiastica, prophana, aliisque selectis materiis ob rerum dignitatem in unum librum collecta* (Leipzig, 1737).¹³ Thomasius also collected and published his *Orationes, partim ex ambone Templi Academici, partim ex auditorii philosophici cathedra recitatae, argumenti varii* (Leipzig, 1683), which were then republished (again with a few small alterations) as *Orationes selectae in Academia Lipsiensi ex auditorii philosophici cathedra recitatae argumenti varii* (Leipzig, 1737). These were 21 orations given between 1644 and 1676, a certain number of which may be cited as being of interest for the history of philosophy: 'Pro Aristotele' (pp. 144–78 (1683 edn)); 'De secta nominalium' (pp. 241–75); 'De ideis Platoniciis' (pp. 275–300); 'De Alexandro Alesio' (pp. 300–322); 'De syncretismo peripatetico' (pp. 323–49), on the pre-existence of souls (pp. 475–95); 'De praestantia theoreticae vitae' (pp. 495–526). Finally, his *Programmata* were in part collected and published by his son Christian with the title *Dissertationes LXIII varii argumenti magnam partem ad historiam philosophicam et ecclesiasticam pertinentes, antea a Beato Autore in academia Lipsiensi intra quadraginta circiter annos per modum Programmatum separatis foliis publicatae, nunc coniunctim editae* (Halle, 1693). Certain of these are also on

¹³ The published text of some of the disputations at which Thomasius presided often was not — or at least not wholly — his, but rather that of the *respondens-auctor*, the young scholar who was being examined. On the other hand, the *Praefationes* with which Thomasius introduced the debates were always entirely his own. For example, the text of the *Disputatio metaphysica de principio individui . . . quam praeside . . . M. Jacobo Thomasio . . . proponit Gottfriedus Guilielmus Leibnitius . . . au[ctor] et resp[ondens]* (Leipzig, 1663; in Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. C. J. Gerhardt, Vol. iv, pp. 15–26) was wholly the work of the young Leibniz: on that occasion Thomasius pronounced the *Praefatio* entitled *Origo controversiae de principio individuationis* (printed in *Miscellanea varii argumenti*, pp. 246–53). But the text of the *Disputatio de doctoribus scholasticis latinis . . . subiiciet respondens auctor Martinus Busse* (Leipzig, 1676), often carelessly attributed to Thomasius, was in fact — as the title-page testifies — partly written by Busse, who sometimes quoted the *Schediasma historicum* "of the most excellent defender (*excellentissimi Dn. Praesidis*)" (§ viii a 7, § xi a), and partly reproduced word-for-word from the text of Thomasius' twelfth Oration, 'De secta nominalium' of 1658 (in *Orationes*, pp. 241–75). It is therefore inaccurate to consider the *De doctoribus scholasticis latinis* as a genuine work by Thomasius. On the other hand, the corresponding *Praefatio* 'De causis ineptiarum barbari aevi scholastici' (in *Miscellanea varii argumenti*, pp. 542–6) was indeed by him. On the controversial question of the attribution to Thomasius of the text of those *Disputationes* in which he acted as defender (*Praeses*), cf. Aceti, *Jakob Thomasius*, pp. 265–7 n. 22.

philosophical subjects : 2. 'De intellectus humani comparatione cum tabula rasa' (pp. 11-19); 14. 'Philosophiam esse meditationem mortis' (pp. 184-94); 28. 'De intellectu agente' (pp. 290-300); 29. 'De Machiavellistis et Monarchomachis' (pp. 300-311); 39. 'Adversus philosophos libertinos' (pp. 437-50); 41. 'Adversus philosophos Novantiquos' (pp. 465-79); 55. 'De vocabulo philosophiae' (pp. 647-60).

The surviving correspondence with Leibniz — consisting of 16 letters written between 1663 and 1672, of which 11 were written by Leibniz and 5 by Thomasius — is of considerable interest.¹⁴ The unpublished works will be discussed at a later stage.

3.3. Despite his parallel interests in theology and church history, on the one hand, and philology and literary history, on the other (these being the fields in which Thomasius produced such a large proportion of his very extensive output), it can justifiably be said that his most original contribution, and the one most fruitful for future developments, was in the area of the history of philosophy. In the domain of theoretical philosophy he developed what were then called the 'instrumental' disciplines of logic and dialectic, and the 'principal' disciplines, comprising theoretical philosophy (with a greater emphasis on metaphysics than on physics: Thomasius frankly confessed to the young Leibniz his incompetence in the latter subject) and practical philosophy (that is, ethics and politics). However, in the area of theory Thomasius did not go much beyond the level of a school manual (with many schematic tables, many 'catechistic' texts of the question-and-answer type) intended to preserve and consolidate, and so make more widely known, the 'accepted teaching' (*doctrina recepta*), which consisted of a version of Aristotelianism reformed according to the dictates of the new German scholasticism.

The value of Thomasius' work on the history of philosophy, on the other hand, is of a quite different order. It was guided by his "innate and upright love of historical truth (*amor ingenuus historicae veritatis*)" (*De stoica mundi exustione*, § 20; quoting from 1682 edn) — something which may be seen to compare closely with the Pythagorean definition of philosophy as the love of wisdom ('De vocabulo philosophiae', in *Dissertationes LXIII*, pp. 647-57). This Pythagorean 'love' protected him from the fallacy of philological-historical erudition (the historiographical positivism of the seventeenth century) — namely, the illusion that it was ever possible to possess historical truth absolutely or definitively. But it also prevented him from manipulating the truth for the sake of personal interest of whatever kind. He identified these personal interests as being, most often, the aim of upholding one's own religion by using distorted or misrepresented versions of the philosophical teachings of the past; an excessive love for antiquity, leading to an exaggerated emphasis on, or forcing of, the significance of certain teachings in the attempt to discover a possible agreement between them and Christianity; conversely, an excessive love for novelty and innovation, an infatuation with all things modern, leading to the loss of that quantity of truth which can

¹⁴ G. W. Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, pp. 1-39.

nevertheless be found among the ancients. The history of philosophy should enable us to discover the true teaching of the philosophers being studied, beyond the merely personal preferences of the historian. Sometimes this historical honesty even drove Thomasius to argue against his own fellows in the Protestant faith — like the Calvinist Lambert Daneau, with whom he disagreed on the subject of the beginnings of medieval Scholasticism:

I know that Daneau (in the 'Prolegomena' to his commentary on Peter Lombard, ch. 1) considered scholastic theology to have begun with Lanfranc, a whole century before Abelard, and others usually follow him in this; however, his statement seems to be inspired more by the desire to promote his own religion than in order to serve historical truth (*Schediasma*, § 52 n. d, ¶ 48, p. 74).¹⁵

With regard to the need to protect himself from the opposite extremes of an exaggerated love for either ancient or modern thinkers, and from the temptation to devise conciliations of a syncretistic kind, Thomasius expressed a number of different points of view of considerable interest. He was frequent in his condemnation of syncretism, which he dismissed outright on several occasions, doing so always in the name of an absolute historical truth that can identify and define a doctrine precisely, restoring to it its own particular characteristics and freeing it from the distortions brought about by syncretism. One example will be sufficient to show this. Thomasius wrote the following observation on the way Plato's ideas had been pulled in all directions between Christians and pagans on the subject of his cosmological theory (in which the world had been created in time *a parte ante* by the Demiurge but eternal *a parte post* by the will of the same Demiurge):

And thus it happened that Plato was quarrelled over by both sides, on the one hand by pagans (*a Gentilibus*) who wished to replace him with Aristotle, and on the other by some Christians who wished to replace him with the divine Word (*cum Verbo Dei*). We, on the contrary, prefer to serve truth and not syncretism ('*Platonica mundi aeternitatis*', § 8, in *De stoica mundi exustione*, p. 38).

The history of philosophy, then, consists in clarifying and defining accurately the philosophical teaching of the past, the theoretical errors of which, if there are any, should be clearly disclosed, not concealed. That was what happened in the case of the errors of the pagan sects and in particular of the Aristotelian sect. We should not even be led to conceal such errors through fear of the *novatores*. In other words, the *novatores* should not be able to take advantage of us "by altering the terms of the long-accepted teachings (*in*

¹⁵ Cf. L. Daneau (Danaeus: c.1530–1595), *In Petri Lombardi librum primum sententiarum commentarius triplex* (Geneva, 1580), 'Prolegomena'; on the same subject see also Thomasius, 'Theologia scholastica et eius initium', § 38, p. 234: "While he [Daneau] nevertheless preferred to take back to Lanfranc the beginning of that scholastic theology, I reckon he did this for the sake of the Reformed religion (*Interim quod ipse [Danaeus] nihilominus maluit ipsius theologiae scholasticae initium a Lanfranco repetere, dedisse eum putem religioni reformatae*)".

movendis diu receptae doctrinae terminis): "Nothing has more disgracefully corrupted the history of philosophy than the attempt to reconcile the Christian faith now with Plato, now with Aristotle, now with the Stoics or other pagan groups." It is those very people who wish to achieve such a reconciliation or agreement, rather than the honest historians, who endanger the body of philosophical dogma (that is, the reformed teaching of Aristotle, which, for good or evil, still holds its place):

Those who overthrow [the present state of the republic of letters] are not those who try to recover the *historical* dimension (*qui partem historicam . . . recuperare student*) — which was not entirely passed over or lost, even in the previous centuries — but those who break up the body of philosophical dogma (*sed qui dogmaticum philosophiae corpus . . . labefactare [student]*), which up to now has remained in our hands in the shape of the reformed teaching of Aristotle, by means of new constructions created day by day, or by substituting the old ones by others that are worse. It is one thing to call into question the teaching usually followed by the peripatetic school (*consuetam scholae peripateticae doctrinam impugnare*); it is quite another to demonstrate how much in it we may owe to Aristotle and how much to Christian commentators. These people either did not know about or carefully concealed a large number of evils (*vomicas*) in Aristotle's teaching, something that has been made clear thanks to the scholarship of our own century, so that it can no longer be denied.

Any further effort is useless: Aristotle is not consistent with Holy Scripture. This is the historical aspect of the question; and as to its dogmatic, or theoretical, aspect, it is better to hold on to the philosophy that has been taught in the universities and has become our life-blood, rather than run the risk of destroying a centuries-old tradition for the sake of foolish novelties.

For this reason, those *novatores* who repeat the old refrain of the agreement between Aristotle and Holy Scripture (*qui veteram de consensu Aristotelis cum Sacra Scriptura cantilenam repetunt*) provoke laughter or pity. As this is how things stand, as far as the substance of the teaching is concerned, I am very willing to support it, and I am not doing any rash favours to the *novatores*, since it is dangerous to change those things that have been our regular nourishment for so many centuries and have, so to speak, become the life-blood of our schools (*ea . . . quae tot saeculorum diaeta continua in succum scholarum . . . et sanguinem abierunt*). But where history is concerned, I cannot go against my principles (*non possum impetrare a meo pudore*) by trying to persuade others that what I see to be Ethiopians are actually swans (*ut, quos Aethiopes video, cygnos aliis coner persuadere*) (*De stoica mundi exustione*, § 20 and n. p, pp. 21–2).

Thomasius' argument was directed at many listeners: at his Aristotelian

colleagues, teachers of theoretical philosophy in the German Protestant universities of the period; but above all at those who mistreated historical truth in a mistaken effort to protect Christian truth — that is, the historians of the concordist point of view. He said that he would name only a few from among the many he could have mentioned: Agostino Steuco, *De perenni philosophia* (Lyons, 1540); Philippe de Mornay, *De veritate religionis christianae liber* (Antwerp, 1605); Muzio Pansa, *De osculo seu consensu ethnicae et christianae philosophiae tractatus* (Marburg, 1605); Guillaume Postel, *De orbis terrae concordia libri quatuor* (Basle, n.d.); Livio Galante, *Christianae theologiae cum Platonica comparatio* (Bologna, 1627). He knew of a few, on the other hand, who had acknowledged that there was a conflict between pagan and Christian philosophy, and in this connection he even mentioned approvingly a "papist writer (*pontificius scriptor*)", Giovanni Battista Crispo of Gallipoli, *De ethnicis philosophis caute legendis* (Rome, 1594), who had often been in dispute with the celebrated Agostino Steuco. But Thomasius' argument was directed also at two great men among his contemporaries, and the *Schediasma* (§ 37, pp. 34–8) may be seen to mark the beginning of his debate with them. They are Justus Lipsius, a concordist who favoured the Stoics, and Pierre Gassendi, who favoured the Epicureans. These were the thinkers who had exchanged Aristotle for "ancient philosophers worse than he was".

The ascertainment of historical truth was also useful to Thomasius as a means of testing the theoretical truth of philosophy, but only in a negative way. He declared that the historian should uncover philosophical errors, not conceal them for the sake of an illusory truth. This made it possible for Thomasius to live at peace with the philosophy of his time, which had been received via an ancient tradition and then reformed — precisely because it was not the best possible philosophy. He accepted reformed Aristotelianism because historical research showed him that genuine Aristotelianism, in the authentic substance of its teaching, could not be reconciled with faith. He, Thomasius, would be incapable of inventing a new philosophy. Nor was it desirable that innovation should overthrow tradition so long as the latter could be endured without causing harm, even with the defects it had. In any case, it was not the historian's task to invent a new doctrine: that was not what was demanded of the "type of writing" (*scribendi genus*) appropriate to the history of philosophy. It was in these terms — distinctly reassuring for theoretical philosophers — that Thomasius expressed himself in the *Schediasma* at the conclusion of his bitter argument directed against the Scholastics and the Aristotelians of his own time, who, being ignorant of the genuine thought of Aristotle, had corrupted his teaching concerning analogy, thereby arriving at the ontology of universal and abstract being.

I would not wish the things we have argued about to be taken as meaning that I wish to change the familiar foundations of these

teachings (*consuetas doctrinarum rationes*). And I do not do so, even in this type of writing, which I want to be mainly about the history of philosophy. However, even he who studies ancient history can live according to the ways of the present day (*Potest autem et ille, qui veteres indagat historias, moribus tamen praesentibus vivere*). I do not like innovations. But I have never regretted knowing about ancient things (*antiquitatis notitia*). I keep this knowledge for myself (*Quam [sc. notitiam] mihi servo*), so that I can become reconciled to the spirit of my times (*ad ingenium seculi*) in so far as those doctrines are concerned which can be upheld without mortal harm (*absque noxa capitali*), but which could not be changed without causing a revolution in the realm of letters (*absque convulsione literarii status*) (*Schediasma*, § 17 n. a, p. 13).

Thomasius upheld this same thesis in the preface to the *Erotemata metaphysica*. He was convinced that for Aristotle 'being as being' (*ens quatenus ens*), the object of metaphysics, was God, and metaphysics was a natural theology. The scholastic tradition, on the other hand, had made an abstract concept out of this idea of universal being, thereby separating general metaphysics or ontology (that is, the doctrine of being and its affections) from special metaphysics or pneumatics (which is concerned with God and the angels). In this way, he thought, general metaphysics had been demoted to the position of a simple philosophical lexicon, the fruit of the "desire for abstraction" (*libido abstrahendi*) of the Scholastics. Despite such convictions, he adapted to the situation and even published a manual of metaphysics considered as ontology. Only in an appendix (and even then embedded within a historical investigation, the 'Historia variae fortunae, quam disciplina metaphysica . . . experta est') did he permit himself to demonstrate how the modern aberration — which though mistaken was not wholly destructive — of a metaphysics reduced to the status of a lexicon had been arrived at:

I have explained, in the history joined on to these *Erotemata*, what I believe metaphysics to be, according to the way that many people treat it today. Once, Aristotle wanted it to be natural theology. But the Scholastics, moving away from this idea (*ab huius consilio scholastici aberrantes*), took it to the point where, after they had cut out of it the part about spirits (*pneumatica*), all that was left was a lexicon of philosophy; a lexicon dressed up in an elegant mask to look like a real science (*lexicon philosophicum, persona . . . justae scientiae . . . indutum compta*), so as to deceive even the most learned men, and appearing to be foremost of the theoretical disciplines. But since young students today cannot do without some sort of philosophical lexicon, this is what leads us — especially since we have to teach beginners — to look favourably on this error, which does not present

any dangers and which has not so far been eradicated from the schools (*Erotemata metaphysica*, 'Praefatio ad lectorem', p. [1], in *Philosophia instrumentalis et theoretica*, which is cited here).

Thus 'truth' is confined to the historical account. It would of course be possible to alter the present situation, which does not entirely conform to truth. However, any change which affected the task of conservation and tradition — which was the proper task of the university — seemed to Thomasius to be worse than the perpetuation of an 'aberration' that might even have some advantages. On the other hand, it was not the task of the historian to correct errors; he only had to show by what path they had been arrived at.

It seems, then, that Thomasius was living within a state of tension obtaining between the ascertainment of historical truths, which the historian of philosophy was called on to reveal without fear, and their consequences for the present on the theoretical-conceptual level. He did not consider that he was obliged to elucidate these consequences, so long as the error concerned was tolerable and formed part of, or could be absorbed into, a total tradition, within which corrections and cautious reforms could be made. When Christian Thomasius — who had by this time abandoned Aristotelianism and was experiencing the new intellectual ferment of the beginnings of the Enlightenment — collected and published his father's *Dissertationes*, dedicating them to Samuel Pufendorf, he explained this point of view:

This [Aristotelian] teaching enabled him [Jakob Thomasius] to reach a more accurate understanding of Church history than was usually possible, . . . and this good and holy man would certainly have arrived more nearly at the only true science of philosophy (*ad propriorem philosophiae verae et unicae scientiam*) with his gifts of untiring diligence and remarkable sincerity, if the period in which he flourished as a writer had allowed him that degree of freedom which by God's grace we enjoy today (*illum libertatis gradum, quo per Dei gratiam . . . fruimur*), to the great vexation of the lovers of sophistry (*ringentibus licet sophistis*), and if his firm conviction that Aristotle was the best of philosophers, . . . together with his fear of those quarrels which he saw were liable to happen daily with those who were trying to discover things beyond whatever had been passed down from the older teachers (*qui ultra tradita veterum magistrorum aliquid sapere allaborarent*), had not impeded his struggle to make further progress along the path of truth (*in hac veritatis semita ulterius progredi*). Therefore this weakness of Thomasius should be attributed more to the place and period than to his intention; and it is rather a cause for amazement — and in this one recognizes the remarkable goodness of God — that in spite of the circumstances of place and time in which he wrote he was able to raise himself so far above the

prejudice of baseless authority (*in tantum ex vano auctoritatis praeiudicio se eleveravit*), and for that reason was able to recognize the deficiencies of the Aristotelian-scholastic philosophy (*Dissertationes LXIII*, 'Benevolo Lectori', pp. [1-2]).

Jakob Thomasius was constrained, therefore, by circumstances of time and place. We can nevertheless see evidence of a clear awareness of the unsettled situation in which he lived and of the obstacles he had to put up with. Such an awareness expresses and nourishes itself in the person of Jakob Thomasius precisely by virtue of his interest and involvement in the history of philosophy.

3.4. *Schediasma historicum*

3.4.1. Both the first edition of the *Schediasma historicum*, published in 1665, and the republication of 1694 have exactly the same structure and layout. There is first of all a dedication, dated Leipzig, 28 September 1665, to three "most excellent theologians": Martin Geier, ecclesiastical adviser to the Elector of Saxony Johann Georg II, Samuel Lange, professor of theology in the University of Leipzig, and Elias Sigismund Reinhart, pastor of the church of St Nicholas in Leipzig. The dedication occupies 5 unnumbered pages; at the end of the fifth page there is an 'Indiculus emendationum praecipuarum' (listing a total of five corrections), and, on the following page, a list of the names of 16 authors "whose opinions have been carefully weighed and considered more particularly than others (*quorum prae caeteris iudicia expenduntur*)". These included Robert Bellarmine, Hugo Grotius, Justus Lipsius, Francesco Patrizi, Agostino Steuco, and the Venetian patrician Stefano Tiepolo, among others. But, as we shall see, the critical literature made use of in the *Schediasma* is much more extensive. The main text occupies pp. 1-94, followed on pp. 94-5 by the 'Summa paragraphorum schediasmatis', an analytical table of contents that usefully summarizes the thread of the argument.

The second edition, edited by his son Christian Thomasius and published at Halle in 1699, bears the title *Origines historiae philosophicae et ecclesiasticae*. In place of the dedication it has an introduction written by Christian ('Praefatio', pp. [2-9]) and dated "Halle, March 1699" (*Hal. Sax. Mense Martio 1699*), followed immediately by the 'Summa paragraphorum' (pp. 1-3) and the unaltered text (pp. 3-148). This is then followed by an 'Index in B. Jacobi Thomassii meditationes msc. varii generis, magnum partem ad historiam philosophicam et ecclesiasticam pertinentes' (pp. 150-233) and an 'Index disputationum' (pp. [234-41]), both compiled by Christian. The first puts together all the titles of unpublished works which he had inherited from his father: he lists them, numbering them under subject-headings according to the volumes in which they were contained, in such a way as would make it possible to trace a text quickly for anyone who might ask him for it (as he wrote: "we are born into this world so that we may serve others with our material resources [*opibus*], and why not also with our thoughts and writings [*cogitationibus et scriptis*]?"). There are 49 subject-headings, comprising as many as 1,077 texts, not counting 1,798 book reviews. Several titles, Christian pointed out, were repeated from one collection to another, and a few others were titles of texts already in print, some of them published by himself in his *Historiae sapientiae et stultitiae* (he had included them here as well in order not to confuse the system of numbering). The other index

listed 86 disputations in chronological order from 16 September 1643 to 26 September 1683, in each case with the name of the *Respondens*, that is, the individual who was defending his thesis. Thus for example at no. 43 we find an account of the disputation, argued by Leibniz as *Respondens*, at which Thomasius presided: it was entitled *De principio individui* and was preceded, as we have seen, by an introduction (*Praefatio*) given by Thomasius acting as *Praeses*, under the heading *Origo controversiae de principio individuationis*. Thomasius' *Praefationes*, of which he had composed 85 up to 1679, were published by the author himself in 1681.

The text of the *Schediasma* is subdivided into 58 short paragraphs, each of which is followed (not at the foot of the page, but within the text) by notes, with notes to the notes as well as a number of long digressions, all of which makes the reading of the work very difficult. Thomasius himself was well aware of this drawback and mentioned it in the dedication to Carpzov of his *De stoica mundi exustione*. In this latter work he remedied the fault by making the digressions into so many autonomous dissertations.

3.4.2. The *Schediasma historicum* is not explicitly intended as a comprehensive general history of philosophy. Hence Thomasius did not give much attention to the division of history into periods, but relied on subdivisions that were already in use and were generally accepted. Leibniz discreetly pointed out the fact that it was not a general history of philosophy, writing at the very beginning of the famous letter to his teacher of 20/30 April 1669: "This morsel (*geuma*: 'foretaste') of yours on the history of philosophy cannot be mentioned without making everyone's mouth water": it makes the mouth water but does not satisfy, it leaves one wanting more. Something is promised that is still awaited: "no one can be expected to produce an entire corpus of the history of philosophy. . . . You will give us the history not of philosophers but of philosophy". Notice the use of the future tense. This agrees with the express wish — looking forward, as it were, to something keenly anticipated — that Thomasius would not limit himself to the ancients: "if only you would continue your account (*stilum filumque producas*) as far the modern period" (Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, p. 15).

In his dedication to the three theologians Thomasius stated that the *Schediasma* was conceived as a simple introductory *Programma* to be placed at the head of the list of public lectures of the faculty: "as you well know, it is a type of writing (*scripti genus*) intended to have a very short life, and that only within the walls of one University (*nec intra nisi unius Academiae fines*). But then one thing led to and gave rise to another. Little spaces opened out and became wide plains. I changed the type of composition (*scriptionis genus*) and out of it came this little book, which is not very big, and which could be useful to a beginner in history" ('*Epistola dedicatoria*', pp. 4-5). The name *Schediasma* remains as testimony of the ephemeral nature of the work as originally conceived; but by now it had become a scholastic text for students of history (of philosophy and of the Church). As such it put forward, sometimes fully drawn, sometimes only in outline or merely suggested,

a general picture of the whole subject. Because of this, the *Schediasma* can be considered as a general history of philosophy.

Thomasius' interest lay more in the origins (as the title of the second edition was to make explicit) than in the later historical developments of philosophical thought. That is to say, he was primarily interested in the emergence of the sects of Greek philosophy and of the Christian heresies from Simon Magus to the Gnostics and the Pelagians. But there were also the origins of mystical theology and of scholastic theology to be investigated, a study that would take us from antiquity up to the Middle Ages, and as far as the Reformation; while the debate about the scholars who had revived ancient thought — the Scholastics, Justus Lipsius for the Stoics, and Gassendi for Epicurus — would bring us up to the present day. This was the general plan, even though Thomasius did not develop all parts of it uniformly.

The main lines for a division into periods are clear. There is Greek thought with its four chief sects (*sectae praecipuae*): there could have been others, but since all had as their main teaching the same dualistic dogma, that nothing derives from nothing and that therefore there must be original matter co-eternal with God, it was better to concentrate on the principal sects which had provided model solutions and which derived from Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and Epicurus. Thomasius knew of other methods for dividing the classical world into periods: he knew Justus Lipsius' *Manuductio*, for instance, where the detailed explanation of the Greek sects was much more complex and complete. He also knew and quoted from the very recently published *De natura et constitutione philosophiae Italicae* (Uppsala, 1664) by Johann Scheffer, "the pride of Sweden who comes from our own Germany" (*Schediasma*, § 13, p. 5), a work that would have led him to a scheme of subdivision and periodization according to the well-known polarity that distinguished between Ionic and Italic philosophy. But this was not what interested him. He shied away from any plan of recounting the whole history of philosophy, preferring instead to concentrate on the turning points, on those crucial periods when the explicit and well-defined origins of the fundamental lines of a doctrine were clearly evident.

Did Thomasius accept the idea of a pre-Greek philosophy? At one point in the *Schediasma* he traced the dogma of the dualistic conflict between the God of good and the God of evil (the 'God' and 'matter' of the Greeks) back to Zoroaster, "the prince of the Magi", and cited Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius, and Apuleius for the derivation of Greek philosophy from the barbarian Magi. "From the barbarian philosophy of these men it [that is, dualism] passed to the Greeks, to Pythagoras (of whom some said that his master was Zoroaster), to Plato, to Aristotle, to others" (*Schediasma*, § 34 n. k, p. 27). Later on he made a point of quoting a famous work on this question, the *Barbaricae philosophiae antiquitatum libri duo* (Louvain, 1660) by Otto van Heurne (Heurnius) (*Schediasma*, § 34 n. l, p. 29). It seems

however that he was not really concerned with the subject of pre-Greek philosophy. If Zoroaster interested him at all it was because of his influence on Simon Magus, since it was from the latter, according to the testimony of the ancient heresiologists (such as Irenaeus, Epiphanius, and Theodoret), that all the gnostic heresies of primitive Christianity originated. In this way Eastern barbarian philosophy could be seen to have exercised an influence on early Christian thought, which would thus have been subjected to the pressure of two influences: Greek classical thought of the four sects, and barbarian thought derived from Zoroaster.

Then came the second period of philosophical-ecclesiastical history, that of ancient Christian thought. Thomasius was particularly concerned with the development of Gnosticism, having become interested in it through his investigation of the concept of *gnosis* as it appeared in Pythagoras and Plato and in Scripture (see for example 1 Timothy 6: 20, a passage that is discussed at length in the *Schediasma*). The Gnostics, though having Simon Magus as their precursor, were according to Thomasius of somewhat later origin. But parallel to them a non-heretical Gnosticism, such as that of Clement of Alexandria, also developed. However, that too was destined to deviate from Christian orthodoxy through an excessive love of Plato. Origen was not mentioned in the *Schediasma*; but three dissertations (nos. 17, 18, and 19) of *De stoica mundi exustione* were devoted to him, and in these his doctrine appeared to be just as heretical (pre-existence of the soul, infinite worlds that succeed each other) as the teachings of the Gnostics that were taken from Plato and the Stoics.

These were the general lines of development of early Christian heresy, which included a large part of the theology of the Fathers:

Starting from Simon [Magus], the heretics introduced an altogether carnal type of theology (*theologiam . . . maxime carnalem*).¹⁶ . . . In abhorrence of this, Clement of Alexandria and others like him threw themselves too violently, as often happens, to the opposite extreme, and tried to call the Christians back to a higher degree of spirituality than it is possible for man to reach in this world; eventually the whole affair erupted, in the case of the Massalians, into open displays of inspired fervour and divine visions (*in apertum Enthusiasmum et iactatas Dei visiones negotium erupit*) (*Schediasma*, § 38, p. 39; § 47 n., ¶ 4, p. 64).

With pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, "a writer who came after Clement of Alexandria" (*Schediasma*, § 52, p. 62), mystical theology began, continuing throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. Thomasius recalled the uninterrupted series of commentaries on the pseudo-Dionysian writings, from Maximus the Confessor to Scotus Erigena, to Tommaso

¹⁶ This is an allusion to the licentious mode of life of many a gnostic 'spiritual', who was already guaranteed salvation by virtue of being who he was.

Gallo of Vercelli, Robert Grosseteste, and Albertus Magnus, on to Dionysius the Carthusian, Marsilio Ficino, and, finally, the most recent translation, with critical notes and commentary, by Charles Hersent (Paris, 1616).¹⁷ At a certain point in the development of mystical theology and parallel with it he placed scholastic theology, which he connected with Aristotle. Thus, commencing with Peter Abelard (from whose school, and from Abelard himself, came the first books of *Sentences*, and hence theology as a system), began the historical period of Scholasticism, condemned by Thomasius as an era when both Aristotelian philosophy and theology were corrupt, a situation which was partly due to the political activity of the Papacy.

Thomasius often referred to Scholasticism, not only in the *Schediasma* but also in other, minor, writings such as 'Historia variae fortunae, quam disciplina metaphysica . . . experta est', and 'Theologia scholastica et eius initium' (in *Historia sapientiae et stultitiae*, pp. 225-43). While discussing the ideas of those historians and theologians who had most recently studied scholastic theology,¹⁸ Thomasius located its origins in the teaching of Abelard, and suggested the following criteria for a scheme of periodization:

On the subject of the history of scholastic theology, one must make a distinction between the time when those factors which determined its occurrence first became operative and the point at which true scholastic theology finally emerged (*distinguendum est tempus occasio-num a tempore ipsius theologiae scholasticae*), just as one distinguishes between the moment of conception and the moment of birth The main factors seem to have been two: the first concerned the changes that the Roman Church had undergone and its decline from pure to impure religion; the other was the rise of Aristotelian philosophy in the Latin world and the veneration in which it was held following the new translations of Aristotle's works The period in which scholastic theology was born coincided with the moment in which, within the Latin Church and under the name of *Sententiae*, entire systems of universal theology began to be written ('Theologia scholastica', §§ 24-27).

This judgement referred to the twelfth century, the period of Abelard and Peter Lombard, since in Thomasius' view it was incorrect to trace Scholasticism back, as some did, to the previous century and to the Eucharistic controversy between Lanfranc and Berengarius.¹⁹

¹⁷ The principal sources used by Thomasius for his discussion of mystical theology were M. Sandaeus, S.J., *Theologia mystica seu contemplatio divina religiosorum a calumniis vindicata* (Mainz, 1627), and G. Voetius (Voetius), *De exercitatione pietatis*, as well as works by Suárez and Gerson.

¹⁸ L. Daneau [Danaeus], *In Petri Lombardi librum commentarius*, 'Prolegomena'; C. Binder [Binderus], *Scholastica theologia* (Tübingen, 1614); J. Himmel [Himmeliuss], *Tractatus de canonicatu, iure canonico et theologia scholastica* (Jena, 1632).

¹⁹ In discussing the problem of the beginnings of Scholasticism, and whether they were to be traced from Lanfranc, Abelard, or Peter Lombard, Thomasius also quoted from Hornius.

He found it useful to follow Daneau in subdividing Scholasticism, by analogy with the Platonic Academy, into *vetus*, *media* and *nova*, but thought it necessary to discuss further the point at which it had began. He saw the first period as beginning not with Lanfranc but with Abelard or Peter Lombard (or perhaps from Roscellinus), and continuing up to Albertus Magnus; the middle period as running from Albertus (1220) to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain (1330); and the third and latest period as continuing as far as Luther (1517).²⁰ At this point his son Christian added an important annotation to his father's text: "Today a fourth should be added, namely, the most recent (*novissima*), from Luther up to the present, which exceeds the others in shamelessness (*impudentia*), and which today is characterized by those who say that they are the only true Lutherans and declare loudly that the others are heretics or heterodox" ('Theologia scholastica et eius initium', § 61 n. c, p. 241).

The figure of Luther marked the beginning of the contemporary period, which was characterized for Thomasius by the Reformation and by the philosophical reform (which, as we have seen, consisted of an Aristotelianism purged of the vanities and distortions of medieval Scholasticism). However, as well as the reformed Aristotelians of the universities there were the *novatores* whom Leibniz wished Thomasius to include in his history of philosophy (Telesio, Campanella, Bodin, Nizolio, Fracastoro, Cardano, Galileo, Bacon, Gassendi, Hobbes, Descartes, and so on),²¹ but with whom Thomasius felt no sympathy.

3.4.3. One of the clearest historiographical theses in the *Schediasma* (later repeated in other dissertations) was that which reduced all Greek (that is, pagan or non-Jewish) thought to one fundamental principle, which was the 'original fallacy' (*proton pseudos*) of the pagans: "it is impossible for anything to be born out of nothing (*non posse ex simpliciter nihilo quicquam fieri*)" (*Schediasma*, § 19 n. c, p. 14). This doctrine gave rise to emanationism — the conviction that intelligences, or angelic beings "are a certain progeny poured out from the divine essence itself (*ex ipsa divina essentia effusas quasdam propagines*)" (*Schediasma*, § 19). But it was above all the source of the dualism of first principles — namely, the coeternity of God with original matter, from which the world was made. All the Greek philosophers found themselves in agreement on this point, according to Gassendi.²² And Thomasius

²⁰ The division of Scholasticism into three periods, by analogy with the Platonic Academy, could be traced back to Lambert Daneau, who in the 'Prolegomena' to his commentary on Peter Lombard (mentioned above), took up a point first made in the *Chronicon Carionis* by Caspar Peucer. See above, Introduction, Sect. 1.5.

²¹ Letter to Thomasius, 20/30 April 1669 (Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, p. 15).

²² P. Gassendi, *Syntagma philosophicum, pars II seu physica*, Sect. 1, Bk. 1, ch. 6, p. 163, in *Opera omnia*, Vol. 1 (Lyon, 1658; facsimile, Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, 1964): "They all agree in this, that that matter

concurred with this view, being influenced by two considerations: first, by the fact that the Greeks considered the principle that “nothing can come out of nothing (*quod nihil ex nihilo fiat*)” to be true unconditionally and without exception; and secondly because they believed that in this way they could absolve God from the charge of having created evil in the world by positing “an autonomous principle from which all evil originates (*independens mali omnis principium*)” (*Schediasma*, § 37 n. s, ¶¶ 1-4, p. 34).

The progeny and diffusion of the whole of pagan philosophy, and its division into different sects (*universae gentilis philosophiae per varias diductae sectas propago*), can be described as growing [out of the dogma of dualism] as from a single rootstock. At this point I should like to examine briefly just those four families of Greek philosophy that are more famous than the others and are headed by Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and Epicurus. Once it is accepted that matter is coeternal (*coaeva*) with God — since this perceptible world (*mundus sensibilis*) is without doubt made up of matter — one of the two had to be necessary in order that the world might exist (whether one or many worlds does not matter for the present), either by the mixing (*commistione*) of matter with itself or with God (*Schediasma*, § 37 n. s, ¶¶ 6-7, pp. 34-5).

Thomasius’ deduction is as follows. Epicurus believed the world to be made from the mixture of atoms with one another (matter mixed with itself), whereas the other three sects all believed the world to have been made by the mixture of God and matter. To Plato this was a free mixing, to Aristotle and the Stoics it was necessary; but while Aristotle held that God had joined with matter in the manner of an ‘assisting form’ (*forma assistens*), for the Stoics he did so in the manner of an ‘informing form’ (*forma informans*) (*Schediasma*, § 37, n. s, ¶¶ 8-10, p. 35).

A similar deduction concerning the four sects can be found in the dissertation ‘Quatuor Graecorum sectae praecipuae’ in *De stoica mundi exustione*. According to Plato, the world arose “from the free joining (*congressu*) of God with matter”; according to Aristotle and the Stoics, “that joining or connecting (*congressum sive nexum*) [was] necessary” (§ 5). So, in conclusion,

let us now bring these [principles] together (*colligamus . . . in nodum*) and set out clearly the differences between the sects (*discrimina sectarum enunciemus*): Plato said that God was the voluntary cause of the world, Aristotle and the Stoics that he was the necessary cause; but the former described him as the assisting form, the latter as the informing form. Epicurus, differing from all the others, said that the world comes not from God but from itself (§ 38).

from which the world was created was pre-existent, because nothing can be made out of nothing (*Omnes deinde in id consentiunt, ut materia praefuerit, ex qua procreatus sit [mundus], quod nihil ex nihilo fiat*)”.

In *De stoica mundi exustione* the four sects were examined also with regard to the question of the end of the world:

Plato and Aristotle will deny that such an event — I am speaking of the destruction of the world in its entirety (*de totius mundi abolitione*) — will ever happen: the former because he thinks that God does not wish it (*nolle*), the latter because he thinks God is not able to do it (*ne posse*). Certain Stoics (for there are some of these, too, who would rescue the world from death) acknowledge, with the Epicureans, that there will be a fire (*incendium futurum*), but they will attribute it rather to some other cause than to divine liberty. In whose place the first would substitute the necessity of fate (*necessitatem fati*), the others the hazards of fortune (*temeritatem fortunae*) ('Thesis', VIII, pp. 7-8).

Three points should be observed in Thomasius' development of this thesis. We may note: (1) that the four sects represent a framework for collecting together the whole of Greek thought, and that Thomasius himself made it quite clear that he was aware that the purpose of this scheme was one of simplification (when he declared his aim to be that of "producing a brief essay on only the four families (*breve periculum facere tantum in quatuor . . . familiis*)"); (2) that the four sects were nonetheless a historical reality, already clearly set out by humanist thinkers before Thomasius; (3) that they were for him also the result of a deductive process, as if to say: once dualism is admitted, the possible combinations of the two first principles are as follows . . . (and so on).

From Thomasius' discussion of the ideas of Justus Lipsius on this same subject we may be certain that he was indeed speaking of a kind of process which was also deductive (though not exclusively so). He examined (*Schediasma*, § 37 n. 5, ¶ 12, p. 35) a passage from Lipsius where the alternatives were described as follows:

Who created the world? Some [the Aristotelians] say, no one, but it has existed from eternity and will be eternal; and among those who consider that it was created, some (such as Strato) say it was made by nature, others (such as Epicurus) that it was made by chance and accident; the Stoics, most truly, say it was made by God and Providence.²³

To this Thomasius raised certain objections that were partly historical yet also partly deductive and speculative in character. Even if the world is eternal this does not, in Aristotle's thinking, exclude the possibility of an *auctor*; and Thomasius was even willing to quote the despised Scholastics "who contend

²³ J. Lipsius, *Physiologiae stoicorum libri tres, L. Annaeo Senecae aliisque scriptoribus illustrandis* (Paris, 1604), Bk. II, diss. 8, p. 71: "Tanti autem operis quis auctor? Nullus, aiunt, quidam et ab aeterno fuit, aeternumque erit. Alii qui factum statuunt partim a Natura (ut Strato) partim a Forte et Casu, ut Epicurus. Stoici verissime, a Deo et Providentia esse".

that the eternal existence of the world, even if it was created out of nothing, is not inconsistent with the absolute power of God (*qui disputant aeternitatem mundi, etiam ex nihilo creati, non repugnare potentiae Dei absolutae*). Furthermore, Lipsius is mistaken in his invocation of three efficient causes when referring to those who acknowledge that the world was created, these causes being nature; chance and accident; and God and Providence. In fact, said Thomasius, this was an incorrect interpretation of Strato's theory. Rather, the concept of 'nature' as used by Strato was equivalent to the function of the atoms of Epicurus. Indeed, nature is not the *auctor*, but "a certain condition or property (*conditio quaedam aut qualitas*)". This is how the 'chance' and 'accident' of the Epicureans are to be understood and interpreted. Moreover, Lipsius said nothing at all about Plato, leaving him only the Stoics with whom to agree; and it had indeed seemed to Lipsius that the Stoics could be said to have agreed with Christianity, even though in reality their God was immanent in the world and acted as 'fate', not as 'liberty'.²⁴ Thomasius' concluding opinion is expressed as follows:

This was Lipsius' proposal, that he would try, as far as possible, to reconcile the Stoics with Christian religion (*maxime reduceret in gratiam cum religione christiana*), in the same way as the Scholastics had treated Aristotle. I doubt whether those who undertake the history of pagan philosophy inspired by this idea (*sic animati*) can ever lay themselves entirely open to the truth, a virtue that for the historian ought to be supreme (*Schediasma*, § 37 n. s, ¶ 24, p. 38).

A second historiographical thesis put forward by Thomasius was his interpretation of Aristotle's thought on two points. We have already encountered one of these two topics, namely, the concept of the eternity of the world *a parte ante* and *a parte post*, of which God is the assisting cause (*causa assistens*). This concept is intermediate between Plato's and the Stoics', because for Aristotle, too, God is the cause extrinsic (*forinsecus*) to matter, and transcendent, in contrast to the teaching of the Stoics, and because even for Aristotle it involved a necessary causality that was not free, unlike what Plato had taught (cf. *Schediasma*, § 37 n. s, ¶¶ 9–10, p. 35; but also, at greater length, the second dissertation, 'Quatuor Graecorum sectae praecipuae', §§ 11, 15–19, 38, and the fourth, entitled 'Aristotelica mundi aeternitas', pp. 58–69, of *De stoica mundi exustione*). The other point in Aristotle's thought discussed by Thomasius is the concept of metaphysics and the specific problems it addresses.

In Thomasius' opinion metaphysics was for Aristotle the 'science of being as being', and this was a concept that differed little, he said, from an ancient Greek definition of philosophy that the school of Coimbra had translated as follows: "philosophy is the knowledge of things as they are (*philosophia est*

²⁴ *Schediasma*, § 37 n. s, ¶¶ 12–23, pp. 35–8. Thomasius devoted the whole collection of 21 dissertations in the *De stoica mundi exustione* to a critical evaluation of Stoicism.

cognitio rerum ut sunt: γινῶσις τῶν ὄντων) (Schediasma, § 7 nn. c, d, pp. 2-3). Now since for Aristotle 'being' in the true and proper sense refers to substances (as opposed to accidents), and since among the substances he gives the first place to that which is immutable, it follows that "in Aristotle the proper object (*obiectum proprium*) of first philosophy or metaphysics was God and divine things" (Schediasma, §§ 15-16, pp. 6-7). For Aristotle, metaphysics coincided with natural theology: the 'being as being' (*ens quatenus ens*) of which he spoke was 'God'. Thomasius was in agreement with Aristotle on this definition, as also with certain Aristotelians of his time such as Soner ("a man most knowledgeable about the philosophy of Aristotle"), Piccart, Dreier, and Cesalpinus.²⁵ The first two belonged to the school of Altdorf and had become expositors of Aristotelian teaching, making use of Suárez, Pereyra, and Fonseca, while aiming to return to a pure form of Aristotelianism. In Dreier's work, on the other hand, the same aim was expressed by arguing against medieval Aristotelianism and against that of the Renaissance scholars of Italy and France, preferring instead to use the ancient Greek commentators. Thus Dreier set himself up in opposition to the school of Altdorf, which, with its more eclectic attitude, used both the medieval commentators and those of the Second Scholastic.

Thomasius was more on the side of Soner and the school of Altdorf, and he very frequently referred to the ideas of the Coimbra school, with whom he found himself in agreement. But he shared with Dreier his opposition to the medieval scholars, or *scholastici*, particularly Duns Scotus and the nominalists. In fact the Scholastics understood the Aristotelian concept of 'being as being' as if it referred to "a certain common nature taken equally from God and from created things (*natura quaedam communis a Deo pariter creatisque rebus abstracta*)". And owing to their ignorance of the doctrine of analogy, by virtue of which it is not permissible "to proceed with abstraction beyond the so-called first analogue (*analogatum*)", they ended up by destroying the doctrine of analogy itself. In fact they upheld the unequivocal and unified nature of being. And in this way they arrived at a general metaphysics or ontology, as distinct from natural theology, which constituted the special part of metaphysics. Ontology, since it was placed above theology and did not have a proper object that was real, finished by becoming a system of empty notions, a mere philosophical lexicon (Schediasma, § 17, p. 7; see also

²⁵ Of the works of Ernst Soner (1572-1612) Thomasius quoted *Problemata miscellanea in philosophiam* (Altdorf) and *In libris XII metaphysices Aristotelis commentarius*, ed. J. P. Felwinger (Jena, 1657); from Michael Piccart (1574-1620) he quoted *Isagoge in lectionem Aristotelis* (Nuremberg, 1605), which was published together with other works by teachers of the school of Altdorf in *Philosophia Altdorpha*, ed. J. P. Felwinger (Nuremberg, 1644); from Christian Dreier (1610-1688) he quoted *Disputationes metaphysicae*, that is his *Sapientia seu philosophia prima* (Königsberg, 1643-4); and from Cesalpinus he quoted *Peripateticarum quaestionum libri quinque* (Venice, 1571). For the three German Aristotelians cf. Petersen, pp. 159-60, 285, 296-7 (Soner); 160, 203, 284, 296-7 (Piccart); 284-5 (Dreier); cf. also Wundt, pp. 55-6; 137-9.

'Historia varia fortunae', §§ 1-8, pp. 69-71). We shall return later to this question of the distortion of metaphysics by the Scholastics.

A third historiographical thesis in Thomasius' work was his interpretation of Pythagoras and Plato. This too was concerned with the two points of philosophy we have just encountered in connection with Aristotle. For the doctrine relating to the origin of the world, Thomasius could not but go back to the *Timaeus* of Plato, and for that reason he spoke of a Platonic God who does not create (because even for Plato matter was pre-existent), but who does shape matter by an act of free will. Hence the world has a free beginning. It will not have an end because, once again, God by his free choice does not wish for its dissolution (*Schediasma*, §37 n. 5, ¶ 9, p. 35; 'Quatuor Graecorum sectae praecipuae', §§ 5-10, pp. 29-30; 'Platonica mundi aeternitas', in *De stoica mundi exustione*, pp. 37-58). Not even Plato can be reconciled with Christian truth.

On the other topic, that of metaphysics, Thomasius linked Plato and Pythagoras: both had a conception of 'being' as the intelligible, distinct from the sensible and detached from it, just as 'true and complete being' is distinct from 'not being' (*Schediasma*, §§ 13-14, pp. 5-6). Here Thomasius turned to the *Republic*: by this means he was able to avoid reducing the whole of Plato's thought to what was given in the *Timaeus*, and in particular he avoided identifying the world of the Ideas with the ideas in the mind of God. The concern shown here to distinguish Platonic from Neoplatonic teaching was also displayed in a number of other passages. After speaking of the four grades or degrees of virtue in the school of Plato, and of the purification of the soul by means of these virtues and its return (*reductio*) to God, as present in the teaching of Plotinus and Porphyry, Thomasius concluded: "I do not ask at this point whether Plato himself upheld the doctrine of the return of souls. It is enough here to assert that this was taught by Porphyry and Platonists like him" (§ 52 n. d, ¶ 35, pp. 70-71).

We have already alluded to the presence in Thomasius' work of the theme of the pre-Greek origins of the Hellenic sects. As a rule he restricted his discussion of this to the topic of the *proton pseudos*, that is to say the dualism of first principles — God and matter, the principle of good and the principle of evil — which he found in Zoroaster, prince of the Magi (*Schediasma*, § 34 n. k, ¶¶ 1-2, pp. 26-7). But the ultimate origin of this error lay outside history, it was in the devil himself: "But first notice the wiliness of the ancient serpent. Knowing full well that he himself was the origin of all evil, he threw the blame for it on innocent matter created by God (*crimen . . . a se reiecit in immerentem et a Deo conditam materiam*)" (*Schediasma*, § 37 n. 5, ¶ 5, p. 34). It is not necessary here to mention the importance for metaphysics of the dualistic theory and of the theodicy that resulted from it, during the time of Thomasius or immediately afterwards: one only has to think of Bayle and of Leibniz. For Thomasius, however, the error of dualism

became a kind of category used to explain the origins both of the Greek philosophical sects and of the Christian heresies (from Gnosticism to Manichaeism), as well as the irreconcilability of all pagan or non-Jewish philosophy with Christian thought (*Schediasma*, § 52 n. d, ¶¶ 80-84, pp. 82-3).

In addition to the principle of dualism there were also certain more specific teachings that had a pre-Greek origin. The doctrine of the angelic hierarchy of pseudo-Dionysius came from the Neoplatonic idea of the grades of virtues. But such Neoplatonic doctrines went back, if not to the mythical figure of Orpheus, certainly to the Egyptians and Chaldeans. Proclus had referred to the sayings (*placita*) of the Chaldeans: he had taken many things from Dionysius (according to Thomasius, pseudo-Dionysius had lived in the fifth century); but the ultimate source of this legacy of thought must be described as having been Chaldean before it was Platonic.

Thomasius dwelt at length on Gnosticism and its origins (*Schediasma*, §§ 31 ff.), taking as his point of departure the initial definition of philosophy as *gnosis ton onton* ('knowledge of beings'). The word *gnosis* had already appeared in the New Testament, where it was used both in a good and a heretical sense (the latter referring to error). In 1 Timothy 6: 20, for example, St Paul spoke of false *gnosis* (*pseudonimos gnosis*): Thomasius examined at length the interpretation of this passage, disputing the assertion that the Apostle had intended to refer to Gnostics proper, which would imply that Gnosticism was already present in the apostolic era and hence had origins earlier than those of Christianity. Instead, Thomasius considered that St Paul was referring to heresies that had come from Simon Magus rather than to heresies in general. The true Gnosticism of Menander, Basil, Carpocrates, and Valentinus was of a later period, and was regarded by Thomasius (agreeing here with Epiphanius) as having begun in the second century, at the period of the Roman bishop Anicetus (*Schediasma*, §§ 31, 33).

Thus for Thomasius Gnosticism was a Christian heresy, just as the individual who hid under the name of pseudo-Mercurius (or Hermes Trismegistus) in the *Pimander* was a semi-Christian Platonist, on the evidence of the convincing reasons adduced by Casaubon, who placed him as living not long after the Apostles, while others put him in the third century, in the period of Porphyry, Plotinus, and Iamblichus (*Schediasma*, § 42 and n. c).

Finally, an important historiographical thesis in Thomasius' work was concerned with the origins and evaluation of medieval scholastic theology (and philosophy). As we have said, he devoted to this subject not only many pages of the *Schediasma* but also a number of other minor dissertations. On the subject of origins, we have seen that Thomasius considered Scholasticism to have begun with Abelard, when theology was first set out systematically,

that is, as a *systema* (in the *Sentences*). It was of particular significance that this should have been contemporary with the other *systema*, of civil and canon law, and with the *systema* of mystical theology of the school of Saint-Victor: "The same period gave us the first systems of scholastic and mystical theology, as if the masters were spurred on by a spirit of mutual emulation — some people have observed that a similar thing happened among the codifiers of civil and canon law (*in iuris civilis et canonici compilatoribus*)" (*Schediasma*, § 52, note *d*, ¶ 61, p. 77). It should be noted that Thomasius discussed the characteristics of Scholasticism together with those of mystical theology (which had originated from pseudo-Dionysius). The causes of both were identical: "The causes which gave birth to them were the same: a longing for novelty (*cupido novandi*), contempt for simple and, as it were, popular theology (*simplicis atque. . . plebeiae theologiae*), and an unhealthy curiosity about the supposedly aristocratic wisdom (*pruriens in sapientiam quasi patriciam. . . curiositas*) of the pagan philosophers" (*Schediasma*, § 52, note *d*, ¶ 3, p. 66). A little earlier he had spoken of the "contempt for a simple theology, which came from fishermen — that is to say, for the theology of the Apostles — and the excessive attachment to Plato" shown by mystical theology. This was the Erasmian theme (which Thomasius was here taking up once more) of a theology that must be biblical, simple, not made up of *quaestiones*, born of the need to adore God, not born of a spirit of inquiry (*curiositas*) or a restless and insatiable desire to argue.

The difference between mystical theology and scholastic theology lay in those who inspired them — Plato for the one, Aristotle for the other — and in their contrasting purposes: the one, being directed towards visionary experience, ended in heretical enthusiasm; the other, being avid of discussion, resulted in the vanity of disputation and the verbosity of the Scotists and the Nominalists, two groups whom Thomasius almost always mistakenly associated, identifying them in a generalized sense as those examples which typified the scholastic doctors.

Thomasius chose to concentrate on the heretical aspects of the two types of theology, as he had done in his examination of *gnosis* in the patristic era. Among the mystics he mentioned John Scotus Eriugena (not to be confused, he said, with "that famous sophist, founder of his own sect among the Scholastics"), and recalled his condemnation (*Schediasma*, pp. 71–3). He next turned his attention to the systematization of mystic theology by Hugh and Richard of St Victor, to the heresy of Amalric, and lastly to the dangerous (and almost heretical) position of Ruysbroeck.²⁶ His survey of mystical theo-

²⁶ On the subject of Amalric and his pupil David of Dinant in connection with their pantheism (identity between God and primal matter), Thomasius wrote again at length in the fourteenth dissertation, 'Stoicus Deus forma mundi informans' (§§ 97–130), in *De stoica mundi exustione*, pp. 199–208. Bayle, in his long note A to his entry on Spinoza in the *Dictionnaire* (1740 edn, Vol. IV, p. 253), drew both scholarly material and inspiration from these passages in Thomasius' writings. Thomasius had already discussed the question "whether God is [identical with] primal matter (*An Deus sit materia prima*)" in

logy proceeded as far as the author of the little book on the *Theologia germanica*, which Luther appreciated so much, but which nevertheless contained dangerous ideas. Despite Luther's praise, Thomasius harboured a number of reservations, and he found a historical reason to explain the popularity of the *Theologia germanica* and the works of Tauler among the Protestants: "it was because they presented a theology which was as different as it could be from scholastic theology, against which Luther in his time had waged a famous war (*praecipuum . . . certamen*), accusing it particularly of having corrupted sound teaching about Christ and about true good works" (*Schediasma*, § 54 n. b, ¶ 8, p. 90).

There was another aspect to the condemnation and discredit, which this time centred on scholastic theology alone. This was its corruption of Aristotle's teaching on metaphysics. In the process of re-adoption by which Aristotelian thought was brought back into the Protestant universities — a process initially opposed by Luther, then taken up cautiously by Melancthon — metaphysics was the last discipline to reappear, a long time after rhetoric, logic and ethics. The most notable early representatives of the new Aristotelianism were Jakob Schegk (1511–1587), Philipp Scherb (d. 1605; founder of the school of Altdorf in 1586, and a former pupil of Tommaso Peregrino at Padua in 1560–84), and Julius Pacius (1550–1635). After them it was not until towards the end of the sixteenth century, in Wittenberg itself, with Daniel Cramer (1568–1637) and Samuel Gesner (1559–1605), and in Altdorf, with Nicholas Taurellus (1547–1606), that there began to be any resumption of Aristotelian metaphysics in the Protestant universities. This was later to become more explicit with the emergence of such figures as Soner, Piccart, and Dreier (whom, as we have seen, Thomasius appreciated and quoted at length).²⁷ This renewed Aristotelianism was in general very critical towards scholastic Aristotelianism, which was indiscriminately identified with the Scotists and Ockhamists. It often shared the anti-scholastic attitudes of the humanists and aspired to a proper restoration of the authentic Aristotelian teaching. To a certain extent this programme agreed with the similar aspirations of the Second Scholastic movement (Suárez, Fonseca, the so-called *Conimbricenses* at the University of Coimbra). This circumstance helps to explain the welcome given to this current of Aristotelianism in the German universities in the seventeenth century. The influence exercised by the Jesuit schools was another contributory factor.

The accusation Thomasius brought against the theology — or rather, the metaphysics — of the Scholastics was that it distorted the Aristotelian concept of metaphysics, the 'science of being as being'. As we have seen,

'Praefatio LXVI: De sectarum conciliationibus' (1668), publ. in *Miscellanea* (pp. 413–17), and the question reappeared (as a discussion *De Deo prima rerum materia*) in Leibniz's letter to Thomasius of 20/30 April 1669 (Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, p. 15).

²⁷ Wundt, pp. 48–55.

ignorance of the doctrine of analogy and excesses in abstract thinking had led the medieval Scholastics (for which read Scotists) to understand the concept of being as that of a generalized and abstract type of being, distinct both from God and from created beings. This in turn had led them to construct a general metaphysics or ontology, one specific but subordinate area of which was special metaphysics or pneumatics, the science of God and created beings. The gross errors into which the Scholastics had fallen were as follows:

The first error consists in the fact that they thought they could ascend from the noblest analogue (*analogatum*) to something more noble than the noblest, something prior to the first, something superior to the highest, and this they considered to be being abstracted from God and from created beings (*ens a Deo et creaturis abstractum*). The second error is this: assuming as they did that God differs from being as the inferior differs from the superior, they considered metaphysics to be the highest of the sciences, quite distinct from all things beneath it, and yet in their metaphysics they descended to a consideration of something inferior to being — namely, God — leaving out other species [of being]. Anyone who, not going beyond the limits of the noblest analogue, holds it to be identical with the primordial or most abstract being and with God, is safe from both these errors (*Schediasma*, § 17 n. a, ¶¶ 7–8, pp. 9–10).

Ontology and its subtleties had emptied metaphysics of its content, reducing it to a mere philosophical dictionary “of the commonest terms” (*comunissimorum terminorum*) — as if the entire subject were to be reduced simply to the fifth and tenth books of Aristotle, which likewise contained a philosophical lexicon, but one whose sole purpose was that of providing an introduction, a *protheoria*, to the rest of the *Metaphysics* (*Schediasma*, § 17 n. a, ¶¶ 20–22, pp. 12–13).²⁸ This was a transformation (*transfiguratio*) of Aristotelian metaphysics that in reducing it to the status of a glossary made of it a mere tool, an ‘instrumental’ rather than a principal discipline, which, “if Aristotle himself were asked, he would call not a part of philosophy but some kind of aid to studying it”.²⁹

²⁸ Thomasius accepted here, and elsewhere, the grouping of the books of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* as proposed by Samuel Petit (Petitus: 1594–1643) in his *Miscellaneorum libri novem* (Paris, 1630), Vol. IV, ch. 9, according to the following scheme: *protheoria* (Bks. V and X on the ‘commonest terms’, Bks. II and IV on the sciences); *theoria* (Bks. I and III, VI–VII, VIII–IX, XIII, XIV, XII); *epitheoria* (Bk. XI).

²⁹ ‘Historia variae fortunae’, § 16, p. 73. Thomasius’ protest was linked to that already voiced by many Aristotelians, whom he quoted: Christian Dreier, *Sapientia seu philosophia prima* (Königsberg, 1644), p. 92; Cornelius Martini (1568–1621), *Metaphysica commentatio* (Wittenberg, 1605; many subsequent edns); Abraham Calov (1612–1686), *Metaphysica divina, pars generalis* (Rostock, 1636), p. 163; Michael Piccart, *Isagoge*, p. 201; Ernst Soner, *In libris XII Metaphysices*, p. 265. Two well-received philosophical lexicons of the period should also be mentioned: R. Göckel (Goclenius), *Lexicon philosophicum* (Frankfurt, 1613); J. Micraelius, *Lexicon philosophicum* (Jena, 1653).

3.4.4. The importance of Thomasius' working procedures and methodological choices lies both in the external aspects — that is, the structural layout and composition — of his historical work, and in their significance in terms of method, which gives it its particular value as a work of historiography.

As we have already mentioned, the *Schediasma* consists of a series of relatively brief paragraphs, each consisting of a few lines. These paragraphs represent so many fundamental theses set out in logical sequence, as can be seen from the final summary of the entire contents, contained in two pages at the end of the book and referring to the various paragraphs in the order in which they follow each other. This is a method of composition that was to be maintained in the German tradition both within and outside the universities, for example in such works as the *Système nouveau* and even the *Monadologie* of Leibniz, and, at a later period, the long series of paragraphs in which Wolff and Baumgarten would arrange their treatises.

The proofs of the theses with their supporting evidence are found in long notes incorporated into the text at the end of each paragraph. They are of various types. They may consist of straightforward bibliographical references for a quotation. Alternatively, they may contain extensive quotation from the sources, from ancient documentary evidence, and from contemporary critical literature. In these cases Thomasius often intervened personally, arguing with the commentators, or even introducing actual philological emendations if the texts being used presented any points of doubt or uncertainty. One example will suffice to give an idea of the method which he followed. The topic in question was the clarification of Plato's statements about the duration of the world: he had thought that the world would last for eternity, not by its own nature but by the free decision of God. Thomasius declared: "I shall prove that this was [indeed] Plato's opinion, first from his own words (*verbis ipsius*); then, in the second place, through the testimony of others (*aliorum testimoniis*); thirdly, I shall reply to those who think differently from us on this subject" ('Platonica mundi aeternitas', § 13, in *De stoica mundi exustione*, p. 39). Finally, Thomasius inserted extensive digressions (*scholia*) on subjects connected to whatever he happened to be dealing with, which were sometimes internally subdivided into paragraphs and, of course, supplied with quotations, sources, and bibliography. These are a few of the digressions inserted into the *Schediasma*: (1) a *scholion* (§ 17, n. a) on the proper object of metaphysics (pp. 8–13), subdivided into 22 paragraphs of its own; (2) § 37, n. s, on the derivation of the four principal sects of Greek thought from the initial error of dualism, together with a discussion of the ideas of Gassendi and Lipsius (pp. 34–8), subdivided into 24 paragraphs; (3) § 52, n. d, on mystic theology and scholastic theology (pp. 63–8), containing 84 paragraphs.

We have already mentioned the fact that Thomasius himself realized the difficulty of reading a text put together in such a way, and how in the

composition of his *Exercitatio de stoica mundi exustione* he improved upon this inconvenient method by making the digressions into *Dissertationes* in their own right.

Exposition by means of theses was the outward expression of a methodological choice that also had a deeper significance. Thomasius was not concerned to expound the teaching of a philosopher in full, but rather to concentrate on a small number of interconnected basic ideas: what was the object of metaphysics, and the significance of the concept of being, in Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and the Scholastics, and, as the most recent consequence, in the Aristotelianism of his own time; what was the conception of the origin of the world that characterized each of the four ancient sects — and so on. The result is a type of history constructed around the presentation of particular problems or fundamental points of view that are characteristic of the various teachings. Thomasius' main interest was to defend Christianity from philosophical and theological errors. To this end it was essential to verify, historically and impartially, the various philosophical teachings, and to evaluate in depth their ultimate significance. The clarification and concentration of thought that informed the individual theses, and the connections between them, were precisely the consequences of such a principle.

The particular character of this method did not escape Leibniz, who spoke of it extremely favourably in his famous letter to Thomasius:

The difference between the bare lists of names and those deeper reasons linking the ideas (*profundas illas de sententiarum connexionibus rationes*) can be easily seen Many others, more knowledgeable about antiquity than skilled in thought (*antiquitatis magis quam artis periti*), have given us biographies of philosophers but not their ideas (*vitas potius quam sententias*). You, on the contrary, will give us the history not of philosophers, but of philosophy (*Tu non philosophorum, sed philosophiae historiam dabis*) (Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. 1, p. 15).

Leibniz was being somewhat optimistic. However, he was looking forward to a future development in which the history of philosophers would be succeeded by the history of philosophy. Certainly, it would not be Jakob Thomasius who would give us the first history of philosophy. But he was also far beyond the other philosophers of his time. Not only do we find in his book an abandonment of the biographical genre (with its anecdotes and the temptations to mere erudition and pedantry that these offered) and a movement towards ideas; but Thomasius also knew how to resist the opposite temptation — that is, the speculative impulse that might have led him to present explicit systems of philosophy in every case, as Brucker was later to do (though in a very different theoretical context). The historian's restraint led him to clarify in a few propositions, in one or two fundamental ideas,

backed up with good proofs, what a philosopher had really thought, setting it free from the biased interpretations (for the most part concordist) that had been put upon it. The fact that he was writing with the care and moderation proper to a historian made the formulation of a doctrine and its connection with other doctrines by means of theses very easy to follow (even if somewhat over-simplified).

The significance of Thomasius' proceeding by theses can be made clearer by examining in greater depth the concept implied in his use of the category of 'origins' (*origines*). His son Christian was aware of this, and perhaps it was for this reason that when he edited the second edition of his father's work he changed its title, placing at the beginning of the altered title the key word *Origines*. In a section dealing with mystic theology and scholastic theology during which he discussed a passage from Voetius (who had explained that mystical theology came "from a contempt . . . for wordy and argumentative theology (*ex fastidio . . . verbosae ac rixosae theologiae*)", Thomasius wrote:

If we look at the earliest beginnings of the two forms of theology, derived from the pagan sects who fought between themselves (*si primas earum origines contemplamur, ex pugnantibus sectis deductas*), the most important thing is to put aside hatred instead of attempting (albeit in good faith) to save the claims of both. For this reason I agree with Voetius — who mentions the trouble caused by argumentative theology (*fastidium rixatricis theologiae*) as being among the causes of the doctrine and teachings of mystical theology — only if this judgment refers not to the origins of mystical theology but to the period of its maturity and dissemination (*Schediasma*, § 52 n. d, ¶¶ 25-6, p. 68).

Thus the concept of origin has a double significance. It may refer to the beginning or emergence, that is, the earliest manifestation in the circumstances of time and place (something which Thomasius, as a good historian, always attempted to determine exactly, often discussing or taking issue with the critical literature over the accuracy of dating when this was in doubt). But it may also have the meaning of 'cause': Thomasius would sometimes speak of *causae procreantes* (*Schediasma*, § 52 n. d, ¶ 13, p. 66). Hence, origin is at the same time a historical and a logical-historical concept: the origins of the two theologies were 'caused by' or 'derived from' opposing pagan sects (in the present example, the mystics from Platonism, the Scholastics from Aristotelianism). In the same way, the four main Greek sects were derived from, or had their origin in, the primary error of dualism. Then from these sects originated, by a coherent development (even though not exclusively because of this), Gnosticism and the other heresies, some of them developing in accordance with a kind of 'law of opposites', of the type Manicheism-Pelagianism, mystical theology-scholastic theology. In this way the significance of proceeding by theses and by their interconnections

becomes comprehensible since by some means the consequences are in a sense epitomized by, or already contained in, the origin, just as in the philosophy of Leibniz the developments are already contained in the monad.

Using this method enabled Thomasius to ascertain with impartial historical clarity (albeit at the cost of many simplifications) the fundamental ideas and premisses of the main philosophical sects. What drove him was the need for historical precision, going beyond the ambiguities and distortions of concordism (as practised by Gassendi in relation to Epicurus, Lipsius in relation to the Stoics, Steuco in relation to Plato and Platonism, the medieval and recent Scholastics in relation to Aristotle). But there was also a religious motive — namely, the need to preserve Christianity immune from the infiltration of pagan dualism, and to keep biblical theology uncontaminated with respect to the argumentative and sterile rationalism of scholastic Aristotelian theology. His opposition to concordism led him to identify and to differentiate the philosophical sects one from another, which in turn led him to a philosophical pluralism. But of course he was speaking of sects, the very existence of which demonstrated the inability of Greek — that is, pagan — philosophy to attain the unity of truth. The old apologetic argument, based on the inferiority of philosophy by comparison with religion (an inferiority proved by the divisions and contradictions between the philosophical sects) was taken up in its entirety by Thomasius. He was anti-concordist, but also anti-sectarian. The dilemma between concordism and sectarianism had not yet been resolved in the concept of eclectic philosophy, as was to happen in the subsequent period, in Christian Thomasius and Buddeus, though it could already be seen in the work of Leibniz. In fact, however, Thomasius was an eclectic himself, in that he accepted the received teaching (*doctrina recepta*), which was the reformed Aristotelianism as taught in the universities of the time. He was an eclectic, but in a conservative and traditionalist sense, while the eclecticism of the Enlightenment thinkers such as Christian Thomasius, Buddeus, and Brucker was of an innovative character. They stood with the moderns, with Descartes, Bacon, Locke, and Wolff — those *novatores* whom Thomasius on the contrary regarded with great suspicion.

He was working within a tradition, and he was aware of its strength and nobility, even if he warned against its limitations with some disquiet. "I do not like innovations. But I have never regretted knowing about ancient things" (*Schediasma*, § 17 n. a, p. 13). However, he knew that even the historian must "live according to the customs of the present time". And because of that, he wrote, he made use of history "in order that I may be brought into contact (*me componam*) with the spirit of the age". *Se componere*: to be opposed to, or to be reconciled with, the spirit of his own age? The ambiguity of the expression reflects the ambiguity of Thomasius' position. On the one hand, he accepted the status of the republic of letters, he felt

himself to be protected by it and at peace within it; he neither wanted nor wished for changes. On the other hand, he pointed out with disquiet its limits and inadequacies, and the imminent crisis which was to lead to its decisive transformation and emergence into the new current of Enlightenment philosophy.

3.5. It is not really possible to say that Thomasius' work had a wide or long-lasting influence, and it would be inappropriate to speak of the *fortuna* of his work in the strict sense. However, there was no lack of recognition and praise from men of his own time or of the period immediately following. As well as the customary commemoration on the occasion of his death (*Programma Academiae Lipsiensis*, 1684) and the learned papers listed by Brucker (Crenius, Fabricius, Reimann, Stolle, Morhof, Moshemius), the appreciation and the use made of his work by two great men, Leibniz and Bayle, should not be forgotten. We have already seen Leibniz's opinion, expressed in the famous letter of 20/30 April 1669, on the subject of his master's historiographical work. But he also appreciated his theoretical position in the field of Aristotelian philosophy, particularly with respect to ethics and physics:

Jakob Thomasius, that most illustrious man, is famous both for his numerous dissertations (*in multis . . . diatribis*) on various subjects but also for his excellent summaries (*in tabulis . . . exquisitissimis*) — very different from the worthlessness of so many others — relating to practical philosophy; we have also his distinguished Introduction to Aristotelian physics, his enquiry into the origin of the Forms, and his notable oration in praise of Aristotle ('Dissertatio praeliminaris' to M. Nizolio, *De veris principiis*, ed. Gerhardt, Vol. iv, p. 156).

Leibniz's memory and praise of his master did not diminish in later years, but indeed were renewed from time to time, up until the period of the *Essais de Théodicée* and several letters written in 1711 and 1714 (to Wolff and Bourguet).

Bayle, who is said to have greatly appreciated Thomasius' edition of the poet Marcus Antonius Muretus, quoted the dissertations of the *De stoica mundi exustione* in the article on Spinoza in his *Dictionnaire*, and he made use of Thomasius' abundant historical learning in relation to the pantheistic materialism of David of Dinant and Strato of Lampsacus (*Dictionnaire*, 1740 edn, Vol. iv, p. 253 n. A; cf. Thomasius, *De stoica mundi exustione*, diss. xiv, §§ 99 ff., pp. 108–9). Indeed, Bayle imitated his working method and presentation, dividing the material into short main theses, which were then supplied with a quantity of additional information and digressions in the form of notes, as in the *Schediasma* and in the dissertations on Stoicism previously mentioned.

The *Acta eruditorum* of Leipzig had regularly reviewed the works of "our

Jakob Thomasius, a most renowned man" (cf. *AE*, 1682, p. 15; 1683, p. 152; 1693, pp. 427–9), but the same cannot be said of Heumann in the *Acta philosophorum* some years later. His silence does not mean that the memory of Thomasius' work was being lost but rather, perhaps, that its significance was being looked at again in the light of the new theoretical convictions about the historiography of philosophy that had been developed and consolidated not least by Heumann himself. Leibniz had optimistically thought that the true history of philosophy was to see the light in Thomasius' work. But, from Heumann onwards, the taste for such things became more demanding. What was wanted was a *philosophical* history of philosophy, compared with which all previous histories seemed now to be too pedantic; and although they were still to be appreciated for the contribution they had made, they seemed immature in their theoretical and methodological approach.

This kind of attitude could already be noted in Brucker, who nevertheless spoke very highly of Thomasius. He had, wrote Brucker, brought back from obscurity "the history of Greek philosophy", which most people ignored and only a few had studied. Moreover, he had not limited himself to understanding Aristotle's thought, with which he agreed, but had also had a profound understanding of the systems of the other sects with which he was acquainted "from the original sources of the ancients (*ex ipsis veterum fontibus*)"; and he had thrown new light on innumerable obscure points by means of his own erudition. He had had no sympathy with "the sterile love of syncretism, which had in the most horrible way corrupted every history of ancient philosophy", and in order to set free men's minds from these prejudices he had "set out the systems of the sects accurately, and with equal accuracy had defined the meaning of the opinions in which they differed" (Brucker, Vol. iv, pp. 336–7). Brucker thus showed that he had grasped very well both the methodological procedure and the historical purposes of Thomasius. However, it is significant that he spoke about all this in his chapter devoted to the 'genuine' Aristotelians of the seventeenth century (Brucker, Vol. iv, pp. 335–8). In fact he had by now given Thomasius a firm and definite place in history. He (Thomasius) was not simply one of those interlocutors with whom he (Brucker) might choose to discuss theoretical questions, and who might possibly find a place in the 'Dissertatio prae-liminaris', but a philosopher in his own right to be placed in his proper historical context. In the Appendix contained in the sixth volume of the *Historia critica*, however, Brucker seems to have had second thoughts. Here he wrote an important supplementary note to illustrate a passage in the 'Dissertatio', in which it had appeared, in the first edition, that Thomasius should not have had a place: "What Jakob Thomasius was able to discern in the history of philosophy, and how shrewdly he perceived the interrelationships of the ancient philosophical systems (*qua mentis acie in nexum systema-*

tum veterum penetravit), . . . is shown by his writings" (Brucker, Vol. vi, p. 26). But fundamentally he was simply repeating Leibniz's opinions.

When we reach the age of Kant we find that Thomasius has already disappeared beneath the horizon of history. The theoretical discussions with which the new historians of philosophy prefaced their works were intended to examine a very different range of problems. In his *Lehrbuch* Buhle mentioned Thomasius in passing when speaking of the distinction between the two groups into which Tschirnhausen had classified the philosophers of his day: namely, the *Wort-Philosophen*, being those who were interested in the classification and terminology of philosophy and were content merely to study the differences between the philosophical sects; and the so-called *historische Philosophen*, on the other. The latter, he said, of whom Jakob Thomasius was an example, "study the history of philosophy more diligently, but on the whole without managing to rise to the true spirit of philosophizing" (Buhle, Vol. vii, pt. 2, pp. 1006-7).

Even Tennemann, in his long theoretical-historical *Einleitung*, did not consider Thomasius very important. He gave him a small space on one page of the chapter on Leibniz, describing him as "a many-sided scholar, endowed with a peaceable spirit, and with a wide vision of the history of philosophy; he laid the foundation for it to be treated in a better and more detailed way" (Tennemann, Vol. xi, p. 85). He may then be said to have laid the foundation (*Grund*), and that is no small thing. Perhaps it is even an exaggeration, for otherwise Tennemann would surely have recalled his judgement when, elsewhere in the *Einleitung*, he came to relate the history of the historians of philosophy who had preceded him — whereas in fact he says that he found nothing in the seventeenth century but "compilations, without criticism, without any discernment in selection, without any philosophical spirit" (Tennemann, Vol. i, p. lxxiv), and imitators of Diogenes Laertius. The only exception, he said, was Bayle; but, alas, he had not written a complete history of philosophy. The true initiator, the only thinker who had left his mark on the whole era, was Brucker, and he alone.

It is useless to look any further, to Hegel and beyond. A manual of the second half of the nineteenth century (which was still being reprinted in the middle of the twentieth), the *Grundriß* by F. Ueberweg, generally so full of information, mentions Jakob Thomasius in only two lines, as the teacher of Leibniz and the father of Christian, who "wrote something on the history of philosophy" (*Grundriß der Geschichte der Philosophie* (13th edn; Basle, 1953), Vol. iii, p. 345). Given the basic emphasis of all historical writing, even that of Germany, directed towards the main lines of development of the modern age, the *Barockphilosophie* was destined to disappear, cut off from the single great international line that led from Descartes, by way of Leibniz, to the Enlightenment and to Kant.

3.6. Concerning Thomasius' life and work, in addition to the eulogies of his contemporaries cited above, the following should be mentioned:

F. C. Hagen, *Memoriae philosophorum, oratorum, poetarum, historicorum et philologorum nostrae aetatis clarissimorum renovatae* (Frankfurt a. M., 1710), pp. 273–96 (a work dedicated to Leibniz); Weiss, s.v. 'Thomasius', in *BUAM*, Vol. xli, pp. 408–9; R. Sachse, s.v. 'Thomasius', *ADB*, Vol. xxxviii, pp. 107–12; Sachse, *Das Tagebuch des Rektors Jakob Thomasius* (Leipzig, 1896).

On his thought, Brucker (Vol. iv, pp. 335–8; Vol. vi, pp. 26, 743, 745) must be mentioned once again. And among more modern contributions (leaving aside the general histories of philosophy):

H. Joly, 'Thomasius et l'Université de Leipzig pendant la jeunesse de Leibniz', *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, vi (1878), pp. 482–500; K. Strecker, *Der Brief des Leibniz an Jakob Thomasius vom 20/30 April 1669* (Inaugural-Dissertation, Würzburg, 1885); W. Kabitz, *Die Philosophie des jungen Leibniz* (Heidelberg, 1909; repr. Hildesheim and New York, 1974), pp. 9, 11–12 n. 2, 58–64; Peteresen, pp. 285, 293, 341; M. Campo, *Cristiano Wolff e il razionalismo precritico* (Milan, 1938), pp. 135–44; P. Mesnard, 'Comment Leibniz se trouva placé dans le sillage de Suárez', *Archives de Philosophie*, xviii/fasc. 1 (1949), pp. 7–32; G. Aceti, 'Jakob Thomasius ed il pensiero filosofico-giuridico di Goffredo Guglielmo Leibniz', *Jus*, n.ser., viii (1957), pp. 259–318; F. Palladini, *Discussioni seicentesche su Samuel Pufendorf* (Bologna, 1978), pp. 280, 290–91.

For his position in relation to the historiography of philosophy:

Braun, pp. 91–2; Schmitt, pp. 505–32; Del Torre, pp. 56–61; E. Berti, 'Il concetto rinascimentale di "philosophia perennis" e le origini della storiografia filosofica tedesca', *Verifiche*, vi (1977), pp. 3–11; S. Masi, 'Ecllettismo e storia della filosofia in Johann Franz Budde', in *Memorie dell'accademia delle scienze di Torino*, II. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, ser. 5, 1 (1977), pp. 164–212.

4. JOHANN MICHAEL SCHWIMMER (d. 1704) *Academia prisca Graeciae*

4.1. Johann Michael Schwimmer studied at Jena, where he received the degree of *Magister philosophiae*. He taught at the grammar school in Rudolstadt, of which he became Rector. He died in the same city in 1704.

4.2. Schwimmer's literary output was mainly concerned with topics in physics and the natural sciences, and his purpose was to popularize these subjects. His best-known work is entitled *Kurzweiliger und physicalischer Zeitvertreiber worinner bey nahe in die Tausend . . . nützliche Natur Fragen fleißigst untersucht und gründlich erörtert*; it was published in Jena in 1676 and was later republished several times under various titles. He also wrote numerous academic dissertations on physics, theology and ethics. Those on the history of philosophy are the three *Exercitationes academicae* published in Jena in 1674 and collected under the title *Academia prisca Graeciae, h.e. Tractatus historicus de Graeciae priscis professoribus, Socraticis, Platonis seu Academicis, Peripateticis et Stoicis, aliisque*.

4.3. Schwimmer's short work cannot properly be described as showing a true conception of the history of philosophy. Indeed, there does not even appear to be any reference to a precise notion of philosophy itself. It consists of three *Exercitationes academicae* which slavishly follow Diogenes Laertius. The most that one can say is that the author seems to have regarded the history of Greek philosophy as the history of actual schools, understood as institutions existing in time, and that he saw philosophers as professors — that is to say, as public teachers.

4.4. *Academia prisca Graeciae*

4.4.1. This brief work comprises three dissertations of 24, 28, and 32 unnumbered pages respectively. Each dissertation is subdivided into paragraphs of varying lengths, from a few lines to several pages. In the second and third dissertations there is also a subdivision of the material into *Theoremata*, each of which consists of one or more paragraphs. The first dissertation also has some marginal notes which serve as subdivisions. There are no footnotes. Bibliographical references are given within the text, and the quotations from Greek authors are given in Greek and then translated into Latin. The book includes an index of names and subjects for all three essays. It is compiled without much care.

4.4.2. The expository scheme followed in this work comes in its broad lines from Diogenes Laertius. Schwimmer distinguished between barbarian and Greek philosophy, but he did not dwell on the former, restricting his comments on it to a few observations placed at the conclusion of the first dissertation. He subdivided Greek philosophy into dogmatic and parenetic (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 2, § 7), this distinction being explained by the distinction within the human soul between the intellect and the will (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 2, § 9). The author declared, however, that he would deal only with dogmatic philosophy, for two reasons — firstly because this precedes the other in the same way that intellect precedes will, and secondly because this only is philosophy in the strict sense of the word (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 2, §§ 12–14). The Greek philosophers were divided into Ionics and Eleatics (though, as will be seen, no further mention was made of the latter). The philosophers of the Ionic succession were listed, following the scheme of Diogenes Laertius in every detail, and proceeding in order from the Ionics in the proper sense (that is, Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes) to Anaxagoras, to Socrates and the Socratics, to Plato and the Academics, to Aristotle and the Peripatetics, and concluding with the Stoics. On the subject of Aristotle (who is treated at some length) both ancient and medieval commentators were mentioned — Alexander, Themistius, Simplicius, Philoponus, Porphyry, Olympiodorus, Boethius, John Damascenus, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Walter Burley, and the Arabs

Avicenna and Averroës. In his discussion of the school of Aristotle, as previously of the Platonic Academy, he also mentioned those who subsequently held the directorship of the school (that is, the *scholarchoi*), up to Andronicus of Rhodes. At this point, declaring that he would omit the names of those who came after Andronicus, Schwimmer mentioned the *Reales* and the *Nominales*, whom he identified with the Scotists and the Ockhamists — two groups of Scholastics that were thereby located within the exposition without any semblance of historical or chronological precision, among the list of the heads of the Lyceum. Then in the following paragraph he proceeded, without offering any justification, to speak about the *secta electiva* and Potamon of Alexandria (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 3, § 53). Having exhausted this subject in a few lines, he went on to deal with the Stoics, with whom the work ends. Nothing is said about the philosophers of the Italic succession.

4.4.3. It is not possible to deduce any particular historiographical propositions from Schwimmer's short work. All that can be found are occasional opinions offered by the author, a number of divergences from the model of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives*, and various expressions of preference. In the first essay Schwimmer emphasizes the importance of geographical and climatic conditions in the development of learning and understanding (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 1, § 11). Contrary to Diogenes Laertius he considered philosophy to have been born among the barbarians (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 2, § 3) even though he did not mention them again subsequently. Finally he made it clear that he particularly appreciated the "valuable and holy (*pretiosa et sancta*)" philosophy of the Stoics (*Academia prisca*, exerc. 3, § 67), a topic on which he quoted the favourable opinions of Cicero, Seneca, and St Jerome, to the extent of upholding the idea of the agreement between Stoicism and Christianity concerning the notion of Divine Providence.

4.4.4. Schwimmer's expository method is the same as that of Diogenes Laertius. Some information is given about the lives of the more important philosophers (parents, place of birth, etc.) and about the circumstances of their deaths; a few anecdotes — nearly always drawn from Diogenes Laertius — are recounted; and, in conclusion, a list of homonyms is provided. For Aristotle there is also a list of his writings and a list of his interpreters or commentators. No information is given about the teaching of the philosophers except in the case of Thales and of the Stoics.

4.5. Schwimmer's short book, though modest and rather lacking in content, circulated fairly widely and can be found in many European libraries. Dornius, in his additions written for the 1716 edition of Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae*, while pointing out that Schwimmer's work was

merely a school compilation, did not fail to include it among modern histories of Greek philosophy (Jonsius, Vol. II, p. 174), and some years later Heumann reviewed it in his *Acta philosophorum* as if it had the status of a proper manual of the history of philosophy, even though only to point out its limitations and lack of practical value.

Schwimmer's work can be considered as a typical example of minor academic production — a production which is for the most part unimportant in respect of content, but of some significance for the sheer number of writings to which it gave rise and for their wide circulation in German universities during the later decades of the seventeenth century. It was frequent at this time for academic exercises and doctoral dissertations to take as their subject topics that were more or less pertinent to the history of philosophy. Among the many works of this type we may mention the following: P. Holm, *De ortu et progressu philosophiae* (Holm, 1672); J. J. Hezel, *De vera philosophiae origine* (Strasbourg, 1676); J. Reiske, *De philosophiae ortu et constitutione* (Jena, 1676); P. C. Hilscher, *De studio philosophiae gentilis* (Leipzig, 1691); J. Esberg, *Exercitium academicum mulieres philosophantes leviter adumbrans* (Uppsala, 1700). These works provide evidence, the testimony of which is not without a certain significance, of an interest in topics of the history of philosophy that was widely shared by scholars, historians, philosophers, and schoolteachers alike.

4.6. On Schwimmer's life and writings:

Jöcher, Vol. IV, col. 419.

On the reception of the *Academia prisca Graeciae*:

Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 30, § 15, p. 174; Heumann, Vol. I, p. 1070.

5. HENNING WITTE (1634-1696) *Memoriae philosophorum*

5.1. Henning Witte (Wittenius) was born at Riga on 26 February 1634 to a rich and ancient family of merchants. After attending the *Gymnasium* in Riga for a number of years, he continued his studies at the University of Helmstedt, where he was still living in 1661. He travelled extensively in Germany, Holland, England, and Sweden, where he had the opportunity to get to know and to form friendships with numerous scholars, with whom he continued to correspond after returning to his native country. He went back to Riga in 1666, and devoted himself to teaching, at first privately and then from 1677 as professor of eloquence and history at the local *Gymnasium*, a post which he held until his death on 22 January 1696.

5.2. Witte wrote a large quantity of short occasional pieces, in prose and in verse, and various works (which were quite well known and circulated widely) in the tradition of polyhistory: *Memoria praeclarorum in incluta Riga virorum, quos a solemnī Salvatoris natalitio ad Michaelis Arcangelis festum anno 1657 saeva mors pestifera lue extinxit* (Riga, 1657); *Diarium biographicum, in quo scriptores seculi post natum Christi XVII. praecipui . . . juxta annum diemque cuiusvis emortualem . . . recensentur*, 2 vols. (Gdansk and Riga, 1688–91). However, Witte was known mainly for his collection of funeral orations which were delivered in memory of scholars of his own century from all over Europe. They are collected in four groups: *Memoriae jurisconsultorum nostri seculi clarissimorum renovatae decas prima /–quarta/*, curante Henningo Witten (Frankfurt, 1676); *Memoriae medicorum nostri seculi clarissimorum renovatae decas prima /–secunda/* (Frankfurt, 1676); *Memoriae philosophorum, oratorum, poetarum, historicorum et philologorum nostri seculi clarissimorum renovatae decas prima /–nona/*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1677–9); *Memoriae theologorum nostri seculi clarissimorum renovatae decas prima /–decima sexta/* (Frankfurt, 1674–84). Each oration is followed by an epigraph, occasional verses, and a list of the works of the scholar whom the speech commemorates. The *Memoriae philosophorum* are introduced by the short history of philosophy with which we are concerned here.

5.3. The short history of philosophy which introduces the *Memoriae philosophorum* does not contain any explicit reference to a precise understanding of the history of philosophy. Nor indeed can the expression ‘history of philosophy’ be found anywhere: it appears neither in the title (which is simply *Eisodion*, that is, ‘Introduction’) nor during the short exposition of the text. Nor is it possible to attribute to the author any definite and explicitly formulated understanding of philosophy itself. His grasp of the subject can be deduced only indirectly from his description of the historical events and developments of philosophy. Referring to Plato’s *Timaeus* (47b) the author speaks of philosophy as “a gift of God”, as the greatest good that has ever come to man, and can ever happen to him in the future. In the garden of Eden Adam had received philosophy directly from God: “Adam learned this from God himself: indeed he was at that time endowed with every kind of both wisdom and knowledge (*omnigena. . . et sapientia et scientia*)”. Thus philosophy is seen to coincide with ‘original’ wisdom — which is, simultaneously, the understanding of divine things (“for he had seen his creator, the builder and ruler of the universe, and had conversed with him in a most intimate way”) and the knowledge of human things (“he had beheld the beginning and the rising up [*principia ac ortus*] of the newly created earth, and with his keen mind he had investigated the nature of things in the heavens, in the air, on the earth, and in the waters”) — even though later Witte seems to indicate that among historical philosophies he preferred authentic Aristotelianism, uncontaminated by Arabic and scholastic influences. For Witte the history of philosophy properly began when, with the Fall of the first man and his expulsion from the garden of Eden, the original fullness of understanding and knowledge faded away; and when, after man had moved away from the state of innocence, “the devil . . . soon scattered

the seeds of false philosophy". The first effect of the Devil's activity could already be seen in Cain, "who, being the founder of Sophistry, threw society into disorder". And for Witte — here repeating the scheme, derived from Augustine, which had already been applied to the history of philosophy by Georg Horn — the entire history of thought could be symbolized as the history of the vicissitudes in man's possession of original wisdom and knowledge, which were often suffocated and obscured, as well as being constantly threatened, by false philosophy.

5.4. *Memoriae philosophorum*

5.4.1. Witte's short history of philosophy was designed to be a simple introduction (*Eisodion*) to the *Memoriae philosophorum*: it comprises 39 unnumbered pages in all and has no internal subdivisions, either paragraphs or subheadings. All bibliographical references are given in footnotes.

5.4.2. For Witte the history of philosophy, which began with the expulsion of the first humans from the garden of Eden, was the history of the vicissitudes in the struggle between good and evil, truth and error, philosophy and sophistry. For the earliest period, without making any distinction between the periods before and after the Flood, Witte listed in order Cain, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Job, David, and Solomon. He made only a few short observations on the so-called barbarian philosophy, while acknowledging that in a less succinct or condensed exposition space would have been given to the philosophy of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Indians, Persians, and Gauls.

In Witte's exposition the philosophy of the barbarian peoples was followed by that of Pythagoras, founder of the Italic sect. From here he proceeded to Greek philosophy in the proper sense. In Greece — "the mother of true learning (*bonae eruditionis nutrix*)" — philosophy had first been developed by the poets, in particular by Orpheus and Homer. They were followed by the Ionics with Thales and the Eleatics with Xenophanes. From the Eleatic sect emerged the sect founded by Epicurus, on whose philosophy Witte dwelt at some length, either because of the importance and nobility of his ideas, or because of the multiplicity of schools to which his teaching had given rise. Next there was an exposition of the events and teachings associated with the sects founded by disciples of Socrates — Plato's Academy, the Peripatetics with Aristotle and Theophrastus, the Cynics with Antisthenes and Diogenes (it was from the last-named, moreover, that the Stoic sect under Zeno was said to have been derived). After the schools which had originated in the teaching of Socrates Witte placed the school of Pyrrho of Elis, with which he also associated the modern scepticism of Cornelius

Agrippa and Francisco Sanchez. The exposition of the history of Greek philosophy concluded with the Eclectics — that is, the *secta electiva* — founded by Potamon of Alexandria. Other followers of this sect were Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Lactantius. From Greek philosophy Witte went on to the philosophy of the Roman period, but he did not dwell on this, restricting himself to mentioning, in order, the names of Marcus Aurelius, Dionysius the Areopagite, Justin, Lactantius, Cyprian, Basil, Arnobius, Seneca, Pliny, and Cicero.

The exposition continued with the history of the Peripatetic sect after the time of Theophrastus, both because of its particular historical significance and because of its interest and importance for the present which Witte recognized as being a characteristic aspect of the philosophy of Aristotle: “we know that even today Peripatetic philosophy is officially taught (*publice proponi*) in our schools, and for that reason something more must be said about what happened to it and how it came down to us”. Aristotle was followed by Theophrastus as head of the Lyceum, and he was followed by Strato of Lampsacus: “after him the true method of philosophical thinking died away (*defecit genuina philosophandi ratio*)”. Even the writings of Aristotle ended up by falling into oblivion, and it was only some centuries later, in the time of Sulla, that they were rediscovered by Andronicus of Rhodes: “from that time onwards numerous commentators endeavoured to purge the precious writings (*scripta . . . aurea*) of this philosopher from all impurities and to increase their glory (*splendorem*) from day to day”. The recovery of Aristotle’s philosophy and the diligence of scholars in the work of purifying it, was, however, interrupted by Arab barbarism: “but Mohammedan barbarism brought about once again the interruption of the study of the more rigorous [kind of] philosophy (*severioris philosophiae studia*) in Greece and Italy until the time, in the tenth century, when it was allowed to rise again, thanks to the work of certain Arabs, especially Averroës and Avicenna”. The study of Aristotle’s philosophy was not resumed in the West until the time of the emperor Frederick II, but since it was known through texts translated from Arabic into Latin, it was mixed up with the occasional remarks (*lucubrationes*) of the Arab philosophers.

Witte devoted much space to the Scholastics, who, under the influence of Arab culture, had developed learning in the West from the twelfth century onwards. The history of Scholasticism was the history of the progressive decadence which had ended only with the Lutheran restoration of the Christian religion to its primitive and original purity. Witte divided the Scholastics into the *sententiarii* (“considered to be very ingenious in discussing and interpreting questions, definitions, and problems from both points of view, according to the custom of the Academics”), whose first representative was Peter Lombard, and the *quodlibetarii* (who “freely allowed their opponent to choose whether to take sides for or against a question”), among whom he

numbered Walter of Bruges and Henry of Ghent. In addition to this first division of scholastic thinkers according to their method of disputation and debate, Witte mentioned the other division, based on the content of their thought, between the Realists (subdivided in turn into *Albertisti*, Thomists, *Summolisti* — that is, followers of Petrus Hispanus — and Scotists) and the Nominalists, whose greatest representative was Ockham. An intermediate position between Realism and Nominalism was represented by the Conceptualism propounded by Jean de Gerson. Witte's final judgment was wholly negative. Aristotelianism, corrupted by the Scholastics, finished by corrupting the Christian religion itself:

because of this insane mania for philosophizing, the Gospel was obscured, faith was extinguished, and hardly anything remained intact in the Church. The Pagan held supremacy over the Redeemer of the world, or rather Aristotle reigned instead of Christ (*pro Salvatore mundi Ethnicus, seu pro Christo Aristoteles regnavit*): he was the head and the summit, while Christ was hardly even allowed to have the position of the leg or foot.

Only the Lutheran reform of the Christian religion had been capable of providing the conditions for a rebirth of genuine philosophy:

the Scholastics continued with these impure and futile ideas, without the slightest sense of shame, until the time of our great Luther. He, driven by a divine impulse and almost like a second Hercules, tried, with his wholly generous spirit, to reform and purify the Papacy, which was entangled in the vulgar errors of the Scholastics and in ideas invented by human ingenuity.

On the subject of modern philosophers, "who in the previous century and in our own have moved away from the commonly accepted teaching of the Peripatetics", Witte mentioned Petrus Ramus and René Descartes, and gave a brief account of their teaching. Witte's history of philosophy concluded by proving that beginning with the age of the Reformation learning had been reborn in all fields, not only in that of philosophy, but also in those of mathematics, philology, history, and law, as well as in poetry and rhetoric. And this conclusion led directly to the task which Witte had set himself, namely, the commemoration of the most famous philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and philologists of his day.

5.4.3. The fundamental historiographical thesis that runs through Witte's short but valuable history of philosophy is as follows: genuine understanding, or true philosophy, is always mixed with false understanding, or sophistry. For Witte this fact lay at the origin of the development of philosophy in history; it was the sign of the presence of evil in human affairs, and it was the direct effect of the Devil's intervention in the course of human history. The presence side-by-side of good and evil, of truth and error, in the human

condition, was already made manifest at the beginning of the history of mankind after the Fall, in the contrast between Cain (the first sophist) on one side, and Abel (the wise man) and Seth (the man of knowledge and understanding) on the other. This historiographical principle, derived from Augustine and already applied to the history of philosophy by Horn, led Witte to emphasize, in his exposition of various historical philosophies, the simultaneous presence in each system of truth and error, or at least of the danger of errors. For example, Plato "recognized one God, great creator of the universe (*summum universi oppificem*)", yet at the same time he also "believed that the world was indeed brought to life (*genitum*), but that God made it out of coeval matter (*materia coaeterna*)"; and his doctrine of the number-ideas, rightly criticized by Aristotle, "made his philosophy obscure". However, Witte's overall picture of the history of philosophy was mostly positive. Not only was philosophy God's greatest gift to man, but the history of philosophy showed in its totality the superiority of genuine understanding over false understanding or sophistry. It was only on the subject of ancient (and modern) scepticism, and, especially, of medieval Scholasticism, that Witte's judgment was wholly negative, because these were the two epochs in which error had prevailed over truth. Another theme found in Witte, but common to all Protestant historiography, is the central place in the rebirth of learning in Europe accorded to Luther's reform of religion (though Witte does not omit to mention as well the contribution made by the humanist critique of Scholasticism).

5.4.4. Despite the brevity of Witte's work and his omission of any explanation of the philosophy of the barbarian peoples and of the Roman period, it is carefully constructed. For his account of Greek philosophy he used the historiographical model based on the succession of the sects. For each school he gave the name of the founder (often adding the names of one or more of their followers) and provided information on their lives, together with a brief but accurate presentation of their main teaching. When dealing with the more important authors of antiquity, such as Pythagoras, Epicurus, and Aristotle, he also referred to ancient and modern scholars as a way of gaining a more thorough understanding of the problem, and sometimes he briefly discussed the interpretations given by these scholars. For every statement made in the text he gave references to the sources, both ancient and modern. His main sources were the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Cicero, Seneca, Diogenes Laertius, Aulus Gellius, and among modern writers Vossius, Hornius, and Lipsius. When explaining the teaching of a philosopher he never quoted the texts of the thinker concerned but, according to the custom of the time, only the historical sources by which his thought had been transmitted.

5.5. Witte's short history of philosophy enjoyed a wide circulation — not only for its own sake, but also because of the success of the *Memoriae philosophorum* to which it served as an introduction — and for decades it was universally appreciated for the completeness of its information, the balance of its judgments, and the soundness of its organization of the material. Dornius, in his 1716 edition of Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae*, devoted a paragraph to Witte in which he assessed his historical work in very positive terms (Jonsius, Vol. II, p. 198). Heumann considered Witte's history of philosophy, despite its brevity and omissions, to be a useful manual (*Compendium*), which was still an appropriate basic textbook for anyone wishing to take up the study of the subject.

In fact Witte displayed very little originality as a historian of philosophy, since he relied on Hornius' *Historia philosophica* for the main plan of his work. Nevertheless, his importance should not be underestimated: he was the first German scholar to write a proper general history of philosophy (albeit quite a short one), and, through the wider circulation of this handy and readable compendium, he became the first writer to introduce into Germany a plan for the exposition of the history of philosophy, derived from the patristic tradition, that had been elaborated several decades earlier by Hornius in the context of Dutch learning. It was a scheme that would later enjoy great success in Germany and would be taken up again not long afterwards by Christian Thomasius.

5.6. On Witte's life and writings:

ADB, 43, pp. 592–3; Jöcher, Vol. IV, col. 2030.

On the reception of the compendium prefaced to the *Memoriae philosophorum*:

Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 34, § 9, p. 198; Heumann, Vol. III, pp. 792–3; Struvius, Vol. I, pp. 18, 156.

6. JOHANN JACOB VON RYSEL (d. 1732) *Continuatio in Vossii librum de philosophorum sectis*

6.1. The only facts known about the life of Johann Jacob von Ryssel are that he obtained a doctorate in jurisprudence at Erfurt in 1692, that he served in various administrative posts in Saxony, and that he died at Wittenberg in 1732.³⁰

³⁰ The 'Ryssel' who is the author of the *Continuatio in Vossii librum de philosophorum sectis* should not be confused (as happens even in the catalogue of the British Library) with another individual of the same name, who was born at Leipzig in 1627 and died in the same city in 1699, who was likewise a *doctor juris*, and who was the author of numerous dissertations on legal subjects, some of which were debated with Jacob Thomasius acting as *Praeses* (cf. Jöcher, Vol. IV, col. 2335).

6.2. The only known work by Ryssel is the *Continuatio in Gerardi Johannis Vossii Librum de philosophorum sectis*. It was commissioned from him by the Leipzig bookseller Johann Caspar Meyer, who published it as an appendix to his reissued edition of Vossius's *De philosophorum sectis*. Meyer had planned to reprint with modifications and additions a number of different works by Vossius on the liberal arts, on philosophy, and on the philosophical sects. These works, though they were no longer available in the bookshops, were much sought after by students because of their suitability as manuals for the study of the history of the arts and sciences as taught in the philosophy faculties of the German universities. Meyer decided in the first place to publish the *De philosophorum sectis*, with Ryssel's additions, intending to do the same — if the experiment met with the success he hoped for — with Vossius's other minor writings (and intending to enlist Ryssel's collaboration for this work also). The project reached no further than the first volume, possibly because the writings of Vossius that Meyer intended to reprint appeared shortly afterwards in the third volume of Vossius's *Opera omnia*. Nevertheless, Ryssel's edition of the *De philosophorum sectis* did have the success the publisher hoped for, and during the course of the next few years there were numerous reprintings. Meanwhile, having obtained his doctorate, Ryssel had abandoned his studies in order to pursue other activities and occupations, without however forgetting the scholarly interests of his youth — or so it would appear, since when he died he left a well-stocked collection of books, the catalogue of which was published the year after his death under the title *Bibliotheca Rysseliana, sive Catalogus librorum . . . quas comparavit . . . J. J. a Ryssel* (Wittenberg, 1733).

6.3. To judge by the result, when the young Ryssel set to work on the task of completing Vossius's manual, he certainly did not have in mind any precise and well-defined notion of the history of philosophy, nor perhaps even any clear concept of philosophy itself. He seems to have shared, though only in its general outline, the idea of an 'eclectic' philosophy that was antidogmatic and strongly critical of the traditional *Schulphilosophie* — the kind of eclecticism of which Christian Thomasius had at that time made himself the standard-bearer and advocate. On the few occasions when Ryssel went so far as to express an opinion on the subject of philosophy, he showed a certain sympathy for eclecticism — not, however, for the Eclectic sect itself, but rather for the eclectic method of philosophizing: "there is a difference between being an eclectic and declaring oneself to be a member of the Eclectic sect" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 211). The eclectic method is not at all the same thing as "that rather inept way of philosophizing" that leads to the indiscriminate rejection of all philosophy, but rather advises against giving blind credence to the authority of one master. It takes "from the sayings and writings of each master whatever is good and true", for there is some truth in every philosophical system. However, Ryssel was anxious to caution his readers that the freedom to philosophize (*libertas philosophandi*) should be understood correctly; and he particularly warned his younger readers that it should only be used with great discretion:

such a method of philosophizing is to be recommended only with caution to young people, who are often too impetuous (*caute . . .*

juventuti praecipitanti obnoxiae est commendandus). If we were to recommend a moderate degree of freedom in philosophical thinking, let not those who are of a contrary opinion (*pars adversa*) object that this freedom is too liberal (*nimis laxam istam libertatem esse*) and that it gives rise to unnecessary problems in philosophy, and even to heresies in theology.

And he concluded that, "in my opinion, beginners should follow one teacher, whereas adults and teachers may philosophize freely" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 212).

Ryssel's idea of the history of philosophy depended more or less directly on his convictions about the nature of philosophical understanding. It is true that he never explicitly set out his idea as a theory; nor can it be said that any such concept was always clearly manifested in his work, which indeed is often uncertain or inconclusive, and was written purely for didactic purposes and the provision of information. But at least in the opening pages of his book he showed that he shared, albeit with a certain hesitation and indecisiveness, the concept of the history of philosophy that was formulated by Hornius and was taken up in the context of German scholarship first by Witte and then, with greater confidence and vigour, by Christian Thomasius in the preface to his *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam* (Leipzig, 1688). According to this interpretation of the history of philosophy, the ultimate source of understanding and knowledge was God himself (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 122). Yet ever since the first occurrence of sin — man being irrevocably corrupt in his nature — beside the divine wisdom bestowed directly by God upon humankind, sophistry had always existed. Sophistry was false and had only the appearance of wisdom; unlike wisdom of divine origin it was "the work of the devil (*diabolum pro autore habet*)", and it had been used by the serpent in the garden of Eden to bring about man's damnation (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 123). Thus for Ryssel "wisdom is either true, in which case it comes from God, or false, when it is mere sophistry, in which case it comes from the Devil. Both were present in Paradise (*in statu paradisiaco*) and both are present today in man's fallen state (*post lapsum*)" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 123).

This idea of the history of philosophy, which was clearly derived from patristic sources, was the one which more than any other could be related to the theological premisses of Protestantism, and yet could equally well be reconciled with the growing eclectic spirit in philosophy. Examined in the light of such a conception, the entire history of thought, as well as each moment within it, was characterized at the most fundamental level by the inextricable mixture of truth and error. From here it was easy to deduce that the task of the true philosopher — who could not but be an eclectic — must be to distinguish, in his interpretation and assessment of different philosophers, the true from the false, separating the good which is present in every

system from the evil with which it is inevitably mixed. Ryssel accepted this idea of the history of philosophy without hesitation and made it his own — in part, perhaps, from personal conviction, and in part simply because he found it in the manuals which he used for his compilation.

6.4. *Continuatio in Vossii Librum de philosophorum sectis*

6.4.1. The edition of the *De philosophorum sectis* edited by Ryssel consists of Vossius' unaltered text (which occupies the first 122 pages) and the *Continuatio* written by Ryssel (which is printed on pp. 122–216). The two texts are preceded by a dedication to the mayor of the city of Leipzig and a preface to the reader (both by Ryssel), occupying a total of 4 unnumbered pages. In its outward form the *Continuatio in Vossii Librum* follows the structure and layout of Vossius' text. It is subdivided into 14 chapters of varying length, from a maximum of 13 pages (ch. 2) to a minimum of barely 2 (ch. 14). Each chapter is subdivided into numbered paragraphs, beginning a new sequence of numbering within each chapter. Each paragraph carries a title. While the paragraphs are mostly rather short, the titles are often very long, since each title contains the author's considered formulation of a particular thesis, while the following text includes the quotations and references that prove it. Indeed, some paragraphs (as also in the case of Vossius) have only the title without any text. There are no footnotes. The bibliographical references are given in the text and the quotations are always given in italics. The work is provided with two indexes, one referring to the various chapters (which is placed as a table of contents at the beginning of the book), and one listing the names of the different philosophers (which covers both sections of the work and is placed at the end of the volume).

6.4.2. The scheme of periodization adopted by Ryssel is the same as that of Hornius, later taken up by Witte and Christian Thomasius, whom Ryssel cited explicitly as his source:

The philosophy which grew up in the conditions of man's existence after the fall (*quae in statu post lapsum floruit*) may conveniently be subdivided into that which predominated before the birth of Christ and that which predominated after. The former is further divided into the periods before and after the Flood (*vel Antediluviana vel Postdiluviana*) (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 124).

On the subject of philosophy before the Flood, Ryssel mentioned Adam and the two sects descended from his sons — namely, the “followers of Seth” (*secta Sethianorum*) who remained faithful to his teaching, and the “followers of Cain” (*secta Cainitarum*) who very soon abandoned it (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 125–7). Philosophy after the Flood began with Noah, the “restorer of the true wisdom”. There then followed two sects that took their origins from Heber (or Eber, a descendant of Shem) and from Nimrod (one of Ham's offspring) respectively. These sects were those of the Hebrews, who were faithful to the true wisdom, and the Nimrodians, who were prop-

agators of false philosophy (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 128-9). The chief members of the first were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses ("the founder of the true philosophy of the Jews"), and Solomon, with whom "genuine philosophy among the Jews reached its highest point" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 130-32). Thus for Ryssel philosophy after the Flood could be divided into Jewish (*Judaica*) and pagan or non-Jewish (*Gentilis*), the latter being divided in turn into barbarian and Greek. The Greek was then further subdivided into *fabulosa* and *non fabulosa*, and this last was classified, following the usual scheme of Laetius, into the Ionic school, from Thales to Pyrrho, and the Italic, from Pythagoras to Epicurus (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 133-4). However, Ryssel did not deal with barbarian and Greek philosophy, because they had already been explained at length by Vossius.

Before the birth of Christ, Greek philosophy was widely known among the Jews and the Romans. Among the Jews, the Pharisees were nearest to the Stoics, the Sadducees to the Epicureans, and the Essenes to the Cynics (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 136), while those mentioned from Roman philosophy were Numa Pompilius; Ennius (considered to be a Pythagorean); Lucretius, Virgil, and Pomponius Atticus (classed as being among the followers of Epicurus); Cato the Censor, Cato Uticensis, and Rutilus Rufus (Stoics); and Terence, Varro, Horace, and Cicero (considered to be fundamentally sympathetic to eclecticism) (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 136-42).

But the Greek sects continued to find followers even after the birth of Christ, both among the Christians and among the Jews and Romans. Ryssel still used the scheme of sects to divide up the history of philosophy in the Christian era in the ancient, medieval, and modern periods. In fact, the Apostles and the early Fathers of the Church considered philosophy to be an obstacle and a danger to Christianity, and, "having repudiated the false teachings (*placitis . . . erroneis rejectis*) of the Greeks and the Jews, [they] spread throughout the whole earth, together with Christian truth, a wisdom that was simple and wholesome (*sobriam et sanam sapientiam*)" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 145). But even so, Greek philosophy very soon found adepts and adherents among the Christians, especially Platonism (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 146-7), followed in the medieval period by Aristotelianism (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 147-55). This was not without grave consequences for religious orthodoxy.

The Pythagorean sect did not increase much in the Christian era: it flourished in the time of Tertullian and gave rise to the Manichean heresy (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 156). Epicureanism, after Lucretius, continued with Lucian and Celsus: it was opposed by the Church Fathers and was reborn in modern times with Gassendi, "the restorer of the Epicurean philosophy" (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 157-60).

As we have already observed, Platonism enjoyed greater success in the Christian era: among the pagans, the followers of Plato included Apuleius, Maximus of Tyre, Porphyry, and the group of *Platonici juniores* or “younger Platonists” (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 165–6); among the Jews, Philo was a Platonist, and among the Christians many of the Fathers leaned towards Plato’s philosophy, “believing that his philosophy was much more acceptable to Christianity than any other” (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 166). However, beginning with Simon Magus — the “patriarch of the heretics” — Platonism gave rise first to the gnostic heresies and then to ‘mystical theology’ (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 168–70). Among those who carried on the teaching of Platonism in modern times Ryssel mentioned Wessel Gansfort, Cardinal Bessarion, Gemistus Pletho, and Marsilio Ficino (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 171–2).

Even greater prominence was given in the *Continuatio* to the fortunes of the Peripatetic sect, both in its development and in the use Ryssel made of it in his division of the historical divisions and periodization. Its main representatives in antiquity were Simplicius and Boethius, and it did not have any following among the Fathers. In the modern period Aristotelianism continued to find followers among both Catholics and Protestants, even if “Erasmus among the Roman Catholics and Luther and Melancthon among our people particularly attacked the blind Peripatetics, and they did not make an idol of Aristotle” (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 176–80). However, Aristotelianism also gave rise to Scholasticism, which Ryssel treated as a separate sect, subdividing it according to the usual scheme into three periods, the first from Peter Lombard to Alexander of Hales, the second from Albertus Magnus to Duns Scotus, the third from Durandus of Saint-Pourçain to the age of the Reformation (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 183–94).

Modern philosophy, for its part, was characterized by its clear anti-Aristotelianism in all fields, in logic, natural philosophy, and ethics. In part, Ryssel used anti-Aristotelianism as a historical category in order to arrive at an overall definition of the philosophical movement of the *novatores*, and to subdivide its main exponents into three groups: “those who moved away from Peripatetic philosophy and applied themselves to perfecting and purifying philosophy (*in corrigenda perficienda philosophia*), whether rational or natural or moral” (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 198). Petrus Ramus and his followers, “of whom the most distinguished is Keckermann”, opposed Aristotle’s logic (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 199–200), while Bacon, Descartes, and the Cartesians carried the attack against Aristotelianism into the field of natural philosophy (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 200–202). From the Cartesian school sprang Spinoza, “a very clever atheist, who, having abused the liberty to philosophize freely, went far beyond the limits set by his master” (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 203). Hobbes was the first

to oppose Aristotle in the field of moral philosophy; his excesses were then corrected by Grotius ("whose approach to the truth was nearer, albeit not complete"), and especially by Pufendorf (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 204-6).

Ryssel's book concludes with four short chapters devoted respectively to the Cynics and Stoics (ch. 11), to the *secta electiva* (ch. 12) to scepticism (ch. 13), and lastly to the syncretists and the opponents of philosophy (ch. 14). Among the Cynics and Stoics, devoting a short paragraph to each of them, he listed Seneca and Epictetus for the pagans, the Essenes (Cynics) and the Pharisees (Stoics) for the Jews, Origen (Stoic) for the Christians, and the Marcionite, Pelagian, and Montanist heresies, all considered to have derived from Stoicism. He cited the names of Justus Lipsius and Jakob Thomasius as modern scholars of Stoicism (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 207-11). On the subject of the *secta electiva* he mentioned that it was founded as early as the beginning of the Christian era by Potamon of Alexandria. However, eclecticism was not strictly speaking a sect, but rather the method of philosophizing common to all the great philosophers — a method today once more highly regarded by the learned men of Europe (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 211-12). In Ryssel's opinion the *secta scepticorum* in the ancient and medieval Christian period did not have any followers (except perhaps Lucian), while in the modern age it had been brought into fashion by François de La Mothe le Vayer (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 213-14). The *syncretistae* were those who claimed to be able to "reconcile all or some of the philosophers who argued among themselves", such as Antiochus and Aulus Gellius among the ancients, and, in the modern period, all those who attempted to make the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle agree with each other. Lastly we have the *philosophiae hostes*, that is, those philosophers whose purpose was to "take away all application and usefulness from philosophy (*omnem philosophiae usum et utilitatem penitus tollere*)": among these "enemies of philosophy" Ryssel placed Daniel Hoffmann and, more generally, the modern fanatics (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 215-16).

6.4.3. Ryssel's book is for the most part a mere compilation, and as we have already seen, its purpose was purely didactic. Ryssel did not intend to put forward and demonstrate specific historiographical theses, but simply to complete Vossius' manual. It is therefore unsurprising that those ideas that can be deduced from the *Continuatio* should all have been derived, more or less consciously, from the author's reading of his sources.

In the first place Ryssel was anxious to demonstrate the close interdependence of the various schools of philosophy and the different theological heresies. So for each of the philosophical sects he discussed he painstakingly listed all the heresies to which they had given rise in the Christian era, whether this was his own opinion or that of the Church historians of his time: from

Pythagoreanism had come Manichaeism; from the philosophy of Plato had emerged Gnosticism, and, more recently, 'mystical theology'; Aristotelianism had given rise to many currents of thought — not only Arianism and the heretical movements more or less directly linked to the Arian controversy (Aetius of Antioch and the Aetians, Eunomius and the Eunomians, Apollinaris of Laodicea and the Apollinarians) but also, and most importantly, the 'naturalistic' rationalism of the Scholastics; and Stoicism had given rise to the Montanist and Pelagian heresies (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 147, 156–7, 168–70, 187–9, 209–10). Nevertheless Ryssel did not think that the harm caused in the domain of religion by the ancient philosophical schools should be considered an inevitable consequence of philosophy as such. Indeed, he condemned with equal rigour those "enemies of philosophy" who upheld the idea of the fundamental impossibility of reconciling philosophy with religion, and who thought that in order to safeguard religious orthodoxy it was necessary to ban philosophy entirely from Christian universities (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, p. 216). It was not philosophy as such that represented a danger for the Christian church, but only the non-eclectic use of reason in philosophical thinking, as well as the confusion (*mixtura*) of theology and philosophy.

It is not surprising that the ancient philosopher whom Ryssel should have found most congenial was Epicurus, to the extent that he provided a concise exposition of Epicurean philosophy — something that he did not do for the other philosophers of antiquity. The school of Epicurus was unique among the ancient sects in that it had not given rise to any form of heresy: the teachings of Epicureanism, especially those which had regard to the theory of knowledge and to ethics, were not by any means inimical to religious belief, nor were they irreconcilable with Christianity — certainly no more so than the teachings of Platonism and Stoicism. One part of Epicurus' teaching that Ryssel particularly appreciated was the so-called *canonica* — that is, logic — which was "composed of few rules" and was simple and easy to understand, without the complications and subtleties of Stoic logic. The one error for which he could be justly criticized was his denial of divine Providence, an error that nevertheless could easily be excused, according to Ryssel, because strictly speaking it

did not flow from his doctrine of the greatest good (*ex eius doctrina de summo bono non fluere*), but rather presupposed the basic premiss of pagan philosophy concerning God and original matter (*primum Gentilismi articulum de Deo et prima materia*), an error into which not only Epicurus but also the other three main sects of Greek philosophy had fallen (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 160–64).

Ryssel expressed a moderately positive view of the philosophy of the *novatores*. In the case of Descartes, he particularly appreciated his method: "the foundation of his method is doubt (*dubitatio*) — not sceptical doubt,

however, but rather eclectic doubt (*non sceptica sed eclectica*), by [means of] which truth may be the better disclosed". He warned against giving too much credence to Descartes' claim of absolute novelty: in the matter of using eclectic doubt, for example, he had been preceded — "and in a more rational and sober way (*saniori modo*)" — by Francis Bacon. In addition, "a number of his philosophical theses (*plura . . . philosophemata*) that he believed he had been the first to discover (*quae noviter inventa putavit*) could already be found in Plato, Aristotle, and others, . . . so that one should not by any means believe that everything found in Descartes is entirely new". It was necessary therefore to take care not to fall into a new dogmatism, nor to succumb to the sectarian spirit. Among those who called themselves Cartesians, very few "follow Descartes with blind adherence (*coeco impetu*)"; most of them, showing greater discretion, simply accepted some of his teachings while rejecting others (*Continuatio in Vossii Librum*, pp. 200–203).

6.4.4. It is evident that Ryssel intended to adopt the same method as Vossius — that is, to proceed by first expounding a thesis and then proving it, drawing support for this proof by adducing evidence from the writings of historians both ancient and modern. Formally speaking, Ryssel followed this method to the letter. However, he took most of the actual evidence and proofs for his theses from the writings on the history of philosophy by Jakob Thomasius (particularly the *Schediasma* and the *Dissertationes*), from Hornius' *Historia philosophica*, and from the first chapter of Christian Thomasius' *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam*. In addition, he used Gassendi for Epicurus and Tribbechow for the history of Scholasticism. Other authors whom he used from time to time were Bacon (especially *De augmentis scientiarum*) and Luther. From Descartes he quoted a number of passages of the *Principia philosophiae*. Among the Church Fathers he drew mainly on Augustine and Clement of Alexandria.

Ryssel hardly ever gave a systematic exposition of the teachings of the philosophers he was writing about. He generally confined himself to the provision of information either about those aspects of their teachings that were the direct cause of the emergence of heresies in the Christian era, or, in deference to a prevailing interest in classification, about those specific philosophical issues that allowed him to decide whether a particular philosophy belonged to one sect rather than to another.

However, even if one leaves out of consideration the unconvincing and over-hasty character of many of his conclusions — not to mention his somewhat inelegant Latin — the fact is that there remains a great deal of confusion in Ryssel's book. There are frequent ambiguities and repetitions, which are partly due to his having adopted the conventional scheme of the philosophical sects in dealing with the question of philosophy in the Christian era. To take a few examples: he deals with Scholasticism not only in the

chapter specifically devoted to it (where he treats it at considerable length), but also — though rather more briefly — in ch. 3 (on the development of philosophy in the Christian era), in ch. 7 (on the Peripatetic sect), and then again in ch. 9 (on the concept of 'Christian philosophy'). Origen is placed among the Platonists, but he can also be found among the Stoics; Lucian appears both in the chapter on Epicureanism and in that on scepticism. It would appear that the author seemed unable to decide whether to put them in one chapter or the other.

6.5. Ryssel's manual must have enjoyed a more or less instant success among students, since within the space of little more than a decade it was apparently reprinted no less than four times. But its serious limitations and deficiencies very soon became obvious to scholars. We can read as early as 1711, in the *Neue Bibliothec*, that "Vossius' *De philosophorum sectis* is a posthumous work, and consequently it is full of errors, many of which have already been pointed out by Jonsius; Ryssel has not only not corrected them but has also, in his *Continuatio*, added a number of new ones" (*NB*, 1711, p. 383). The judgment formed by Dornius some years afterwards was also negative (Jonsius, Vol. II, p. 383). Several years later there was another unfavourable assessment, that of Struve, who judged Ryssel's work to be totally inadequate in filling in the gaps of Vossius' manual (Struve, Vol. II, p. 156). Brucker was to repeat a similar opinion a little later (Brucker, Vol. I, p. 35).

6.6. On the life of Ryssel:

Jöcher, Vol. IV, col. 2336.

On the reception of the *Continuatio in Vossii Librum*:

NB, 1711, p. 283; Jonsius, Vol. II, Bk. III, ch. 28, § 4, p. 155; Struve, Vol. II, p. 156; Brucker, Vol. I, p. 35.

7. EHREGOTT DANIEL COLBERG (1659-1698) *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*

7.1. Ehregott Daniel Colberg (Colbergius) was born at Colberg in Pomerania on 26 January 1659. He first studied at Greifswald, where his father Johannes also taught for some time. Johannes was a rigidly orthodox Lutheran theologian, well-known for his intervention, through a number of different writings, in the syncretist controversy in which he took up a position opposed to that of Calixt and the moderates of Helmstedt. Daniel moved to Rostock, where he continued his studies. He spent some time also at Königsberg and Stockholm, where the King of Sweden appointed him

assistant professor of moral philosophy in the University of Greifswald. In 1691 he was promoted to the chair of moral philosophy and history. He gave up teaching in 1694 when he was named as pastor at Wismar, where he died on 30 October 1698.

7.2. Colberg's interest in theology dominated all his literary output. Even his writings on historical topics were all governed and motivated by a clear polemical intention, and were linked to the theological-religious controversies which divided the Protestant world at that time. He wrote numerous dissertations, one of which, entitled *Unicum, proprium, adequatum remedium therapeuticum atheologiae*, was published at Rostock in 1680, while the others all date to the period when he was teaching moral philosophy at Greifswald: *Sciagraphia philosophiae moralis*, *De errore populari circa mores*, *De tolerantia diversarum religionum circa mores*, *De tolerantia diversarum religionum politica*, *Sciagraphia juris naturae*, *De tolerantia librorum noxiorum politica*.

Of greater relevance are the two books on the Platonic origins of the gnostic and 'mystical' heresies in both ancient and modern times. These too were published by Colberg during the period when he was teaching at Greifswald, and they circulated widely. In the first book, written in German and published in two volumes with the title *Das platonisch-hermetische Christenthum, begreifend die historische Erzeblung vom Ursprung . . . der heutigen fanatischen Theologie, unterm Namen der Paracelsister, Weigelianer, Rosercreutzer, Quäcker, Böhmen, Wiedertäufer, Bourignisten, Labadisten und Quietisten*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1690-91), Colberg gave a critical exposition and a determined rebuttal of the interpretation of Christian dogma put forward by the so-called 'mystics' and 'fanatics' (*Schwärmgeister*) in antiquity, in the medieval period, and above all in modern times (when their number included Theophrastus Paracelsus, Valentinus Weigel, Jakob Böhme, the Anabaptists of various persuasions, the Rosicrucians, the Quakers, and the Quietists). In the second work, which was rather shorter than the first and was written in Latin under the title *De origine et progressu haeresium et errorum in Ecclesia specimen historicum, in quo ostenditur, quod haereses in primitiva Ecclesia, imprimis seculis prioribus natae, pleraeque philosophiae Platonicae originem debeant, et cum modernorum fanaticorum deliriis in multis conspirent* (n.p., 1694), he dealt systematically with all the gnostic heresies, or heresies considered to be related to Gnosticism, of the ancient world (Simon Magus, Carpocrates, Valentinus, Marcion, the Nicolaitans, the Cainites, the Manicheans, Origen himself, and his followers), and showed their derivation from ancient Pythagoreanism and Platonism. Of more immediate interest for the historiography of philosophy are the six *Disputationes academicae* that Colberg composed at various times during the short period of his activity as a teacher at Greifswald and later, when he left university teaching to take up the position of pastor at Wismar, collected together to form a single work (reflecting the similarity of their subject-matter): the result was published in one volume under the title *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum per universum terrarum orbem dispersa* (Greifswald, 1694).

7.3. In examining the question of the causes of heresy within the Church, Colberg maintained that while, on the historical level, the occasions that had prompted the emergence and development of the various heresies might have been very varied, "the chief and direct cause (*maxime et immediate*) of the birth and growth of heresy and error in the human mind was the perverse

application of human reason and its conclusions — that is, philosophy — to revelation and the divine mysteries (*ad res revelatas et mysteria divina*)” (*Specimen historicum*: ‘Praefatio’, fol. [3]^r). The truly religious man could not but follow the warning given by St Paul “that we should bring our reason into captivity under obedience to Christ” (a paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 10: 5), a warning which Colberg commented on in the words of a famous theologian of the previous century, Nicholas Selnecker: “we should subject reason and judgment, nature, human wisdom, philosophy, flesh, blood, and the whole man, together with all knowledge, to the word of Christ and those things that pertain to the kingdom of Christ” (*Specimen historicum*: ‘Praefatio’, fol. [3]^r). The pagans, with their mere semblance of wisdom and their depraved customs, had given proof of the vanity of philosophy and the exercise of natural reason. In this case too Colberg took up a Pauline theme, observing that while the pagans had indeed had the opportunity to know the Creator and to devote themselves to honest things, nonetheless “the corruption of nature and the impulsion of perverse habits (*naturae depravatio et perversae consuetudinis impetus*) dragged down mankind into evil, to which they were already prone” (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 69). The damage caused to human nature by original sin had produced in man a state of absolute decadence both of intelligence and the will:

“professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (Romans 1: 22–3). As a result, since men preferred to follow their own inclinations and corrupt ways, they finally allowed themselves, through their disregard for the light of the inner law (*neglecta luce legis internae*), to fall into depravity and wickedness, and turned their evil ways into laws (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 69–70).

It is precisely in the historical origins of philosophy that the seed of that corrupting power which was to accompany it throughout its history is clearly revealed. Colberg wrote:

There are a number of people who are accustomed to arguing fiercely among themselves about the origin of philosophy. Some claim that it came from the Patriarchs, others attribute its discovery to the peoples who lived beyond the confines of the Church (*gentibus extra Ecclesiae gremium viventibus*). . . . I however believe that the philosophy that reached the Greeks from the East and was then transmitted by them to the West, and which, by the power of the holy pontiffs, was spread more or less throughout the entire world, did not originate from the Jews alone, nor from the pagans (*Gentilibus*) alone, but rather contains a mixture of the two — a combination of that human wisdom that the pagan thinkers (*Gentiles philosophantes*) discovered through

their reasoning, with Jewish teaching (*doctrinae Judaicae*), which came from revelation (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 23-4).

From the very beginnings of its history philosophy had been a blend (*mixtura*) of human wisdom and divine revelation, which came about as a result of the contact between the pagan peoples of the East — in particular the Egyptians — and the Jews, who were the trustees of divine revelation. But, far from having the effect of illuminating and enriching, through the spark of the divine wisdom of the Jews, the human wisdom of the peoples of the East (and through them that of the Greeks as well), this contact ended up by having a corrupting effect on precisely those elements of divine wisdom that had been transmitted to the pagans. The cause of this had been the perverse application to this authentic revealed wisdom of the human faculty of reason, which, because of man's fallen condition, was flawed in its very nature. Colberg believed that this fateful destiny had accompanied philosophy throughout its history. Not only had Eastern and Greek philosophy originated, directly or indirectly, in a mixture of human reason and divine revelation; but even the finest expressions of Greek thought, during the period of highest philosophical development — that is to say, Platonism and Aristotelianism — had, in various forms and at different times, carried on the same work of corruption and perversion, even after the advent of Christianity. For Colberg the proof of this was to be found in the existence of heresies within the body of the Church at all periods, in ancient, medieval, and modern times:

for both Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy did great harm (*praecipuum. . . damnum*) to the Church. The former checked and stunted the growth of the young Church in many different ways, and still attempts even today to eclipse the light of the reborn Gospel (*renati Evangelii*). And ever since the thirteenth century, when scholastic theology began to flourish, the latter [sc. Aristotelianism] began to oppress the Church with a power which even today it has not entirely put aside (*Specimen historicum*: 'Praefatio', fol. [3]^v).

In fact, as has already been mentioned, in his most substantial works Colberg concentrated on illustrating the effects (which had been so damaging to religious orthodoxy) of the application of Platonic philosophy to the Scriptures, both in ancient times with Gnosticism and in modern times with the 'mystical theology' of the 'fanatics' (*Schwärmgeister*) of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However this does not mean that Colberg's evaluation of Aristotle's philosophy — and more especially of its historical outcome — was any less negative. Aristotelianism, too, founded as it was on an underlying naturalism, had had just as many disastrous consequences for genuine Christian faith, even though they had been of a different kind. Colberg had also intended to write a history of scholastic theology, but he was prevented from doing so, firstly by his academic work and then by his

premature death: "I have it in mind, if God should grant me strength, and my ordinary occupations should allow me the necessary leisure (*otium*), to publish (*typis committere*) something about the kingdom of darkness (*Regnum tenebrarum*) that was born from the mixing of Aristotelian philosophy with theology" (*Specimen historicum*: 'Praefatio', fol. [4]^v).

7.4. *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*

7.4.1. It is the variety of the subjects treated in the *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum* that, of all Colberg's works, make it the one most directly relevant to the historiography of philosophy. It is a collection of 6 dissertations written in Latin, which he had presented and debated in public at various times during the 8 years of his teaching at the University of Greifswald. They bear the following titles: 1. 'Lux Sacrarum Literarum in tenebris Gentilismi resplendescens' (pp. 1-22); 2. 'Inquisitio in natales philosophiae' (pp. 23-44); 3. 'Veritas sub fabularum involucri latens' (pp. 45-66); 4. 'Legislatores Graecorum et Romanorum Mozaisantes' (pp. 67-93); 5. 'Origines morales' (pp. 93-126); 6. 'Libri antiquitatem mentientes, Sybillarum, Hermeticis et Zoroastris' (pp. 127-77). Each *Disputatio* is subdivided into paragraphs and is preceded by a short summary. The quotations, which are numerous and often very long, are given in italics. Bibliographical references are all included within the text. The work does not have a preface, nor is it supplied with indexes.

7.4.2. In Colberg's opinion, philosophy was born among the peoples of the Near East, and it was then transmitted by them to the Greeks:

in the first place, it is undeniable that all peoples had their own [sort of] philosophy, in some cases primitive and crude (*rudem et informem*), in others more developed and refined (*excultam et politiore*), according to whether they were more preoccupied with war and economic concerns, because of the unfruitfulness of the land which they cultivated (*propter infelicitatem terrae*), or enjoyed a more peaceful way of life (*tranquilliore vitae statu*). This is why the Eastern peoples, who enjoyed greater leisure (*majori otio*) — both as a result of the more amenable climate (*coeli temperiem magis commodam*) and because they had inherited from their ancestors peaceful places in which to live — were able to apply their own minds to the contemplation of nature before others did, while those peoples who dwelt in the western and northern regions were preoccupied with searching for new places to settle and making them suitable for living in, and with other necessary things, and hardly understood anything beyond the concerns of the home and the organization of the community (*negotia domestica et civilia*) (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 24).

According to Colberg, the first among the peoples of the East to develop philosophy were the Egyptians, either because they had had earlier and more

frequent contacts with the Jews (who as the chosen people were the custodians of the wisdom of divine revelation), or because they were favoured by particular conditions of geography and social organization. In the matter of divine knowledge, the philosophy of the Egyptians, said Colberg, was wholly derived from Jewish wisdom — a wisdom that had been first transmitted to them by Abraham, then by Joseph, and lastly by Moses, but which they very soon “fouly polluted and corrupted by the filth of their own reasoning” (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 29). The sciences, on the other hand (especially mathematics, geometry, and astronomy), were developed by the Egyptians quite independently of the Jews (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 26).

The distinction between theology (which was inherited from the Jews and soon corrupted by the application to it of natural reason) and the various individual scientific disciplines (which were discovered and evolved by the pagan peoples in an original way quite independent of the Jews) was also valid, in Colberg's view, for all the other Eastern peoples prior to the Greeks. In his exposition the Egyptians were followed by the Chaldeans, whose 'native' or 'indigenous' philosophy (*domestica philosophia*) was astrology: the *Oraculi chaldaici*, however difficult it might be to attribute them with any degree of certainty to the early Chaldeans, could nevertheless be considered as “remnants of the teaching of Daniel, which he communicated to these peoples, but which were corrupted and distorted into a false meaning (*reliquias . . . doctrinae Danielis . . . depravatas et in alienum sensum detortas*)” (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 32). After the Chaldeans came the Persians. Their priests — including Zoroaster, in whom some traces of Jewish thought could still be found — worked out a theological system which was vain, superstitious, godless, and idolatrous, “before the light of truth and divine wisdom appeared to them through Daniel the light-bearer”; and subsequently, too, “it being the custom of the pagans (*mos gentilium*) not to keep the truth in a pure state for very long, but to mix their own reasonings with it, so it came gradually into a state of some confusion” (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 33). After the Persians came the Phoenicians, whose native philosophy was mathematics (especially arithmetic) and physics, and whose distinctive contribution to philosophy was the first formulation of the atomistic theory (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 34-5). Colberg concluded his exposition of the philosophies of the Eastern peoples with the Phoenicians, and then moved on to an appraisal of the Greeks.

Colberg believed that the philosophy of the Greeks had come mainly from Jewish wisdom, either indirectly through the intermediary of the Eastern peoples, or perhaps through direct contact between the Greeks and the Jews. In expounding the history of Greek philosophy, Colberg generally used the traditional scheme — which he took from Clement of Alexandria — of the threefold succession of the sects, namely, the Italic with Pythagoras, the

Ionic with Thales, and the Eleatic with Xenophanes (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 39-43).

In the fifth *Disputatio*, however, Colberg used a pattern of subdivision for the history of Greek thought that is of considerably greater interest. Here he discussed at length and in some detail the content of Greek moral philosophy, giving particular attention to its metaphysical foundations. In his judgment, Socrates could not be considered the founder of moral philosophy among the Greeks, since the Greek poets had already "scattered in their writings not a few moral teachings". Yet Colberg, interpreting the reference made by Socrates in Plato's *Philebus* (16 c) to a mythical Prometheus who had bestowed divine gifts among men as an allusion to the figure of Moses, claimed to be able to identify the origins of Greek moral philosophy even further back in time, in ancient Jewish wisdom. This wisdom, which as we have seen was present in a mutilated and corrupt form in the philosophy of the Egyptians, was then transmitted by them to Pythagoras, from whom derived that current of speculative thought which, passing first via Socrates and then through Plato and the Stoics, ran throughout the history of Greek thought. For both Pythagoras and Plato the human soul was part of the *anima mundi* or soul of the world (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 98). For them "the body . . . does not belong to the substance of man but is a kind of prison of the soul" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 101) from which the soul has to free itself, "by means of detachment from the senses and from relations with the body" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 102), in order to attain to a condition they referred to as *deificatio*. This state was man's highest good and the purpose of philosophy: by the term *deificatio* they meant "the pouring back of the human soul into the soul of the world (*refusionem animae humanae in animam mundi*), from which it had so to speak been snatched away (*discerpta*) to be placed in the body" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 98). Colberg believed that the Pythagorean-Platonic theory of the pre-existence of souls and metempsychosis had come to the Greeks from the Egyptians. These teachings, already considered to be very ancient in the time of Pythagoras, had their origin in "Moses' account . . . of paradise and of the expulsion of Adam". The ancients, when interpreting the biblical account, had understood 'paradise' as the "heaven from which Adam — that is, the soul — had been expelled, to be placed in the body — that is, in a prison — as a punishment for sin" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 105-6). Thus at the very beginnings of Pythagorean-Platonic metaphysics the story of the Creation and of original sin could be found; but, as Colberg observed, it had been "misunderstood and very badly applied", seeing that in the thinking of both the Egyptians and the Greeks it was understood

- (1) that man was essentially pure soul; (2) that the soul was in the likeness of God, having the same nature and essence; (3) that the

soul, in turning towards matter, had cut itself off from happiness; (4) that it had been confined in the body as a place of punishment, and that the same process was repeated, as it passed from body to body, until it should be purified; (5) that it would finally be assimilated into God and restored to its original condition (*assimilationem cum Deo et restitutionem pristini status*) (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 106).

Stoic philosophy was derived from Platonic thought. Zeno, who for a time had been a disciple of Polemon the Academic philosopher, "did not entirely reject the accepted teaching of the Platonic tradition (*acceptam Platonis disciplinam*), but merely tried to correct it — that is, he explained it according to his own understanding (*secundum genium suum*), while preserving its fundamental basis" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 106). According to Colberg this claim could be proven on the basis of the Stoic doctrine of the *anima mundi* (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 1079).

The speculative way of thinking represented by the Pythagorean-Platonic-Stoic tradition was opposed by Aristotle and Epicurus, who "maintained that reason alone was the only true guide (*rectam ducem*) to follow, and on these grounds they absolutely refused to accept those theories which could not be reached by reasoning" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 110). Colberg considered that Aristotle and Epicurus, although they spoke in different accents, had both rejected the fundamental thesis of Pythagorean-Platonic metaphysics, namely, the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul and of its "return to the soul of the world", instead of which they put forward the contrary thesis, that "the soul dies together with the body" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 110). Colberg was quick to point out that the commentators were not unanimous on the subject of Aristotle's doctrine of the soul: "in fact he speaks in an obscure and uncertain way (*obscurae . . . et dubie*), to such a degree that it seems as though he were reluctant to explain what he [really] thought" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 110). Among those who upheld the view "that Aristotle believed in the immortality of the soul" he cited Thomas Aquinas, Steuco, the theologians of Coimbra, Contarini, Scaliger, Vossius, and Calixt, while among those who defended the opposite opinion he mentioned Tertullian, Gregory of Nazianzus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Pomponazzi. Colberg himself shared the latter view, and in support of this interpretation he put forward the well-known and much-discussed passage from *De anima* (111, 5), which he explained with the help of a passage from Gassendi in which the opinions of Alexander and Averroës were set out and elucidated (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 111–12). On the other hand, Colberg maintained that even Aristotelian ethics "assumed . . . the doctrine of the death of the soul together with that of the body" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 110), since it could be deduced "that for Aristotle the highest happiness does not reach beyond the limits of this life

(*beatitudo summa . . . huius vitae terminos non excedat*), nor is it to be sought outside human society (*extra societatem civilem*)" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 114).

Lastly, Colberg identified a third current in the history of Greek thought, which was represented by Archelaus of Miletus, Socrates' master, and by Aristippus, founder of the Cyrenaic school (to whom "nothing is honourable or base by nature", *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 121), and, above all, the sceptics Pyrrho and Carneades. All of these thinkers — and this was the reason why Colberg put them together — "had discussed moral philosophy in such a way that they had undermined its very foundation and measured all honour and justice according to man's free will or according to a custom that had arisen by chance (*fortuito*)" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 121). The origins of the scepticism of Pyrrho and Carneades could be found, according to Colberg, in the teaching of Socrates and Plato,

who discussed philosophical questions, both theoretical and practical, merely in probabilistic terms (*qui probabiliter de rebus philosophicis disputabant*); they completely rejected the judgment of the senses (*sensuum iudicium plane respuebant*), and taught that reason should accept only those truths which the soul originated from itself (*nisi quam anima suppeditaret ex se ipsa*) (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 122).

This was proved by the uncertainty shown by Socrates about the immortality of the soul (in the *Apology*) and by the discussion of this same subject in Plato's *Phaedo*. However, Pyrrhonian and Academic scepticism, when applied to morals, had had serious consequences and "had first introduced the opinion that all natural honour and baseness (*omnem honestatem et turpitudinem naturalem*) had been extirpated" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 123).

Colberg did not discuss Roman philosophy at length, and when he did speak of it, he merely alluded to it briefly. In the matter of philosophy the Romans had been entirely dependent on Greek thought, from which "they also inherited (*receperunt*) . . . the various Greek sects" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 43), so that, among the Roman thinkers, it was possible to find Pythagoreans (such as Ennius), Epicureans (such as Lucretius and Virgil), Stoics (such as Cato of Utica and Rutilius Rufus), and Eclectics (such as Horace and Cicero).

Greater attention was given to philosophy in the Christian era. In this period, those who devoted themselves to philosophy followed "one of the sects that have been mentioned [Pythagorean-Platonic, Aristotelian, Sceptic], which, however, they either adapted and rectified according to the standard of Holy Scripture (*iuxta sacrarum litterarum normam correxerunt*) or even set up as a teacher and guide (*magistram et ducem*) to Scripture" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 123). In the patristic era the dominant philo-

sophy was Pythagorean-Platonic metaphysics, "which a good number of the Church Fathers loved immoderately, even to the extent of imprudently (*incaute*) mixing it with theology" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 123). According to Colberg, the pernicious mixture of the two was the origin of the *theologia mystica*, which continued in the medieval period with Johannes Scotus Eriugena, and, after the Reformation, with Theophrastus Paracelsus and the "modern fanatics" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 123-4). Even the philosophy of Descartes was for Colberg simply another, albeit very particular, way by which the perpetuation of ancient Platonism had been achieved in the modern age, since in his view there was an affinity between the *prima principia*, or first principles, of Descartes ("the senses lead us astray, and therefore no trust should be put in them; one should question everything; whatever we perceive, we perceive with the mind alone; only that is true which we understand clearly and distinctly"), and those of Platonic philosophy (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 102).

On the other hand, the naturalistic and rationalistic tradition of ancient Aristotelianism was continued in medieval Scholasticism — about which Colberg made only a few brief remarks, though as we have seen, he had intended to write a book specifically devoted to this subject (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 124). The tradition of Epicureanism was continued through Gassendi. As for Hobbes, Colberg considered that he should be seen as a follower of Pyrrho and Carneades, at least in regard to moral philosophy, because of his identification of the idea of justice with the concept of utility (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 124-5).

7.4.3. In Colberg's interpretation, the history of philosophy more or less coincided with the history of natural reason, which, though certainly different in its developments, had always been equally disastrous in terms of the ultimate result. In the first place, the application of human reason to the fundamental principles of the Jewish revelation had produced Pythagorean-Platonic metaphysics, which then, during the early Christian era, gave rise in turn to the ancient Gnostic heresies, and subsequently, in the medieval and modern periods, to the so-called *theologia mystica*. When allowed to develop on its own, reason had produced, on the one hand, the rationalistic naturalism of Aristotle (in antiquity) and of the Scholastics (in the Christian era), and on the other, the scepticism of Pyrrhonian and Academic philosophy.

In the light of this basic thesis — which runs through all of Colberg's writings, determining even the schemes of periodization he made use of in the course of his work — it is possible to pick out several more precise historiographical ideas. It was Colberg's constant preoccupation to show the greater antiquity of the divine wisdom of the Jews by comparison with that of all other peoples, especially those of the East. For example, the first and third *Disputationes* were devoted to identifying biblical echoes and

resonances — particularly of the book of Genesis — in the various pagan mythologies, both in the pre-Greek East and in the Greco-Roman tradition (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 2-3, 56-64), but also in the mythologies of the peoples of pre-Columbian America, especially of Peru and New Spain (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 3-4).

A second fundamental thesis is that which sees the origins of philosophy as being not Greek but Eastern. This thesis (which is supported with abundant proofs in almost all the *Disputationes*) turns out to be closely linked to the preceding one, and its intention is the same — namely, to acknowledge and highlight the privileged status of the divine wisdom of the Jews. In Colberg's view, philosophy first emerged among the peoples of the Near East (the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Phoenicians), favoured as they were by particular geographical and social conditions (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 24-5); and it was possible to prove, on the basis of the biblical narrative, the existence of more or less frequent and sustained contact between these peoples and the Jews (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 4-10), from whom they must have acquired those elements of revealed wisdom to which they then applied their rational deliberations. Colberg never mentioned other Eastern peoples, such as the Indians and Chinese, in his writings; and he denied (again with the support of abundant proofs) the very possibility of speaking of the existence of philosophy in the proper sense among the peoples of the West before the Roman conquest — and, above all, before their conversion to Christianity (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 24; cf. also pp. 51-6). Thus Colberg's general thesis refers not so much to the problem of the barbarian or Hellenic origins of philosophy, as it had been posed by Diogenes Laertius, but rather to the way the problem had been formulated and discussed by the Fathers of the Church.

Colberg strongly upheld the idea of the dependence of Greek philosophy on Jewish wisdom and on Eastern philosophical traditions. The proofs for this were mostly derived from Clement of Alexandria and referred both to the direct contact between Greeks and Jews and to the contact between the Greek philosophers and those Eastern peoples who had in turn taken the basic elements of their theology from Jewish revelation (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 11-20, 35-43, 96, 103). However, the Greek philosophers, who were once described by Clement of Alexandria as being "thieves and robbers", had for that very reason "cleverly kept secret the origin of their wisdom so that they would not lose the honour of having discovered it" (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 35; cf. also p. 18), and they always sought to present as their own original discovery what was in reality nothing but the interpretation of truths received from others. Of course Colberg believed that the theory of the dependency of the Eastern philosophies on Jewish wisdom was valid particularly in the case of the metaphysical tradition of Pythagorean-Platonic-Stoic thought — a transmission which had resulted, as

we have seen, from a mixing of theories about God and Creation drawn directly or indirectly from the Jewish tradition, with the indigenous form of Greek philosophy. In regard to the Aristotelian and Epicurean schools, as well as to Pyrrhonian and Academic scepticism, Colberg considered these philosophies as original and authentic products of Greek philosophical speculation. In particular, Colberg judged Aristotle's thought, and that of Epicurus, as representing the most perfect example of the use of philosophical reasoning, free and independent of all revelation (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, p. 110). However, while it was possible to recognize Aristotelianism as the philosophical system which had surpassed all others in its faithfulness to the ideal of reason as man's unique and supreme guide, at the same time its naturalism, both in metaphysics and ethics, proved for Colberg the failure of every form of rationalism (a failure which ultimately led to impiety and godlessness).

Since Colberg's research was guided by an interest that was fundamentally theological, he limited his observations on philosophy in the Christian era to a demonstration of the fact that, whatever philosophy was actually made use of, the mixture of philosophical knowledge with revelation had inevitably had damaging effects on the purity of the Christian message. In the *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum* this idea was merely stated, and the author referred those wishing for a more thorough exposition to the two books of his that dealt specifically with this topic, as well as to the *Schediasma* of Jakob Thomasius (*Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, pp. 123-4). However, the basic thesis relating to philosophy in the Christian era was that which sought to examine the application of philosophy to theology: such an application always produced negative results, and unavoidably led in the direction of mysticism and of naturalistic rationalism. This in turn led to the conviction that only a rigidly scriptural theology was in any real sense possible and legitimate.

7.4.4. The specific purpose attributed to the history of philosophy as it is present in the *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum* was to prove a number of precisely defined historiographical and speculative theories. Even the subdivision of the work into 6 distinct *Disputationes* was an indication of the author's intention to make his own opinions clear. Colberg was not interested in biographical details, and mentioned them only if they served to demonstrate his two main theses. In his discussion of philosophers of the past he spoke primarily about their doctrines and teaching, especially those relating to God and the soul and their effects in the field of ethics. His main source was Clement of Alexandria, from whom he took not only factual information but also a variety of approaches to evaluation (that is, interpretation and appraisal). He made use also of Origen, Lactantius, Eusebius, and Augustine, and quoted frequently from Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, Albinus,

Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, Stobaeus, and Iamblichus. Among modern authors, he used Gassendi and Vossius extensively, and drew rather less frequently on the work of Steuco, Ficino, Melanchthon, and Lambert Daneau.

As has already been pointed out, Colberg chose in his exposition of Greek philosophy to abandon the traditional historiographical pattern of the succession of the philosophical sects. He preferred to establish the links between them on the sole basis of the similarities or affinities between their doctrines (especially in the field of metaphysics and ethics), even where the adoption of such a criterion might lead to conclusions directly opposed to the received historiography of the sects. In addition, perhaps because he was guided and motivated by his interest in speculative questions and by a desire to prove his theories, Colberg quoted extensively, wherever possible, from the actual texts of the philosophers whose teachings he was expounding. He included long passages from Plato's *Phaedo*, but quoted also from the *Apology*, the *Symposium*, the *Philebus*, the *Republic*, and the *Timaeus*. He also gave numerous quotations from the Aristotelian *De anima*, and other passages from the *Metaphysics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and the *Politics*.

7.5. The *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*, like Colberg's other theological works (*Das platonisch-hermetische Christenthum* and the *Specimen historicum*), circulated quite widely and seems to have been appreciated both for the obvious learning and erudition of its author and for the thoroughness with which he set out his argument. Nevertheless, when it appeared at the end of the seventeenth century it was already out of date, and for this reason it had little or no influence on the development of the historiography of philosophy. Nor does it seem to have been used to any great extent by historians of philosophy in the early eighteenth century, and indeed Colberg appears quite evidently to be behind the times, both as a theologian and as a historian of philosophy. On the theological level he professed orthodox Lutheranism of the most rigid and intolerant sort. And, at a time when the pietistic movement had already emerged and was spreading widely throughout Germany, he continued to uphold a line of argument linked to the theological-religious controversies that had divided the Protestant world in the preceding decades, but which were spontaneously dying out with the rise of the new controversy about pietism. His own argument against natural reason and indeed against all philosophy — that is to say, Platonism in the first instance, but also Aristotelianism — was directly connected to the condemnation of philosophy first pronounced by Luther and then consistently upheld by orthodox Lutherans. This condemnation was shared throughout the seventeenth century by the majority of theologians (especially by Church historians), and had very little in common with the arguments against philosophical tradition typical of such men as Christian Thomasius, or of the

nascent Enlightenment movement that was then beginning to emerge in Germany. Colberg's argument, in fact, did not lead in the direction of Thomasius's empiricism and philosophical eclecticism but rather towards a rejection of reason and philosophy that was radical and complete.

Like Tribbechow and many others before him, Colberg was not so much a historian of philosophy as a historian of the Church and of the theological and religious controversies to which philosophy had given rise. Hence he was not really interested in philosophy for itself but only in its historical relevance to the development of theology. Even the historiographical terms and categories most frequently used by Colberg, such as *mystica theologia* for the Platonic and *theologia naturalistica* for the Aristotelian tradition, were taken from seventeenth-century Lutheran writings on Church history — from Tribbechow, for example, and especially from Jakob Thomasius, whose work he used and quoted from extensively.

7.6. On Colberg's life and writings:

ADB, Vol. iv, pp. 399–400; *Jöcher*, Vol. i, col. 2001.

On the later history of *Sapientia veterum Hebraeorum*:
Struve, Vol. i, pp. 183–4, 221–2.

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